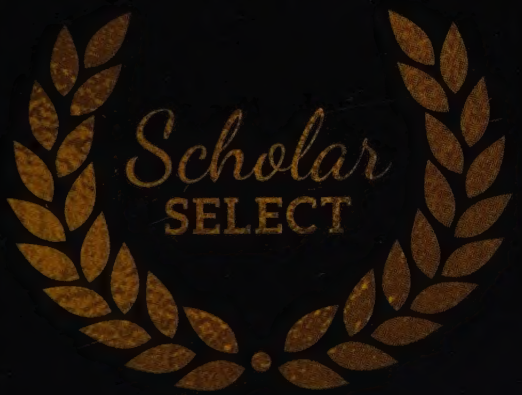
Practical Pictorial Photography, Part 1



ALFRED HORSLEY HINTON

Practical Pictorial Photography, Part 1

PRACTICAL PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

PART I.

Contains a simple statement of the theories which govern pictorial work in photography, and working instructions as far as it is possible to reduce it to practical rules.

PART II.

Contains numerous types and examples, showing the application of the practice and theories given in Part I.

PRACTICAL PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

ILLUSTRATED.

Part I.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS IN THE APPLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY TO ARTISTIC ENDS.

BY

A. HORSLEY HINTON,

Editor of "The Amateur Photographer." Author of "L'art Photographique dans le pay sage," "The Handbook of Illustration," "Platinotype Printing," etc.

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Practical Pictorial Photography.

PROBABLY no branch or application of photography has been so misunderstood, or has suffered so much by such misunderstanding, as that which forms the subject of this book. It has suffered because it has been so often criticised for failing to do what it was never intended to accomplish, and condemned for not doing the very thing the performance of which it was essential should be left undone if success was to be attained in the particular application of photographic means which we call PICTORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

Now let it be quite clear that we are merely dealing with photography applied to a certain purpose—pictorial photography is not photography in the sense in which the word is commonly understood, but merely an endeavour to apply *some* of the powers which Science has placed at our disposal—because the employment of photography in the most perfected form of the craft does not necessarily accomplish the ends in view; and it is my task to briefly explain what those ends are, and to point out how the means at our disposal may best accomplish them.

Finding it impossible within the compass of one little book to give examples of the various points dealt with, or to illustrate them as fully as I think is desirable, I have confined myself in Book I. to a general statement of the theory and practice of Pictorial Photography as I understand it, and in Book II. I give a series of examples which are intended to show the application in actual work of the principles laid down in Book I. For the convenience of all

FELDEE SHORE.

classes of readers, the two books are published separately and also together.

I state this here because, whilst either book may be taken independently, I feel it but due to myself to say that my tale is not told until both sections are read in due course.

Now I only want willing readers; for the present I am not disposed to attempt to make converts. I only desire to help those who already are anxious to cultivate the use of photography to pictorial ends. I want, therefore, to be quite sure at the outset that the help and information of which the reader is in search is the kind of help and information I am on this occasion and in this little book setting out to give. Pictorial Photography is a modern term created to meet a modern development of ideas, and we may not all be meaning the same thing when we use it. On the opposite page is a reproduction of a photograph which, with all its sins of omission and commission, may serve as a typical example.

Is it a picture? It is a photograph. Is it, my good sir or madam, what you understand as a *pictorial* photograph? I am not asking as to its merits, but would you regard it as belonging to the genus concerning which the following pages have to do? If you say "Yes," very well; we understand each other, and we may go ahead. But some may say, "I can't see anything in it—it is a good cloud, but I should have liked some fishing smacks and some fisher folk —something of interest to explain where it is, and all that." Very well, my friend, on other occasions I may have written something for you, or may do so hereafter; but for the present I fear this little book is not what you are in search of, albeit if you will peruse its pages we may come to a better understanding before we part. Because a photograph does not contain some objects of intrinsic interest and does not proclaim its whereabouts, it is not necessarily the less pictorial.

Turn to the next reproduction, entitled "Requiem." Does that please you better? Well, say you, "Yes, that's more like: there's an old fishing boat and landing stage, and there's always something so quaint and picturesque about such things." I do not agree with you quite. If my picture "Requiem" possess any merit at all it is not on

"REQUIEM."

account of its representation of fishing boat or pier, because you know very well that for a shilling you could any day purchase a much better portrait of a fishing boat, and this of mine is a poor kind of a pier alongside of the usual photographs of Brighton or Hastings.

Although in "Requiem" there are some masses rather rudely portrayed which might possess more interest to the average person, yet the merit, if any, in this, as in Feldee Shore, is the same: it depends upon the amount of success which has attended the endeavour to express or suggest the feelings or emotions which nature sometimes creates upon those who are in sympathy with her, and do not only derive pleasure from Nature by what they are able to learn of her laws, her constitution, and her uses.

And now, having attempted to achieve a kind of personal explanation, we may proceed.

The Twofold Function of Delineation.

The quality which has distinguished photography from the first and which has brought it into such high esteem and contributed chiefly to its utility, to such a degree that the industrial, commercial, and social conditions of to-day could hardly be without it, is the completeness and accuracy with which it can reproduce anything which is set before it. A faithful and perfect delineation, then, is the goal towards which Science and mechanics have striven in photography as generally understood.

Such also was probably the aim of primæval man who first found himself possessed with the power of delineating with a sharp stone, or with his finger-tip, in the wet sand. So far as he was able he copied certain objects; but as he attained to greater facility in drawing, it is conceivable that he would put this power to a use. He would draw something, and then, either with or without supplementary sounds or gesticulations, he would endeavour to convey to others some scene, or event, or idea.

The mastodon or more recent elephant, when compared with the huge bulk of rocks, and hills, and forest trees, is not such a great beast as he would appear to puny man who met him for the first time, whilst his trunk and tusks

are by no means, when compared with his size and singular build, such all-predominant features as we commonly conceive them to be; and yet the first man who in his wanderings encountered such an animal, would, it is easy to conceive, greatly exaggerate the total size and especially emphasize the abnormal form of the prolonged upper lip in his attempts to convey a notion of the beast to his fellows by means of a drawing.

The cave-dweller who in his wanderings had crossed a vast arid plain, might naturally try to convey an impression of its flatness by a horizontal line and a wave of the hands to express its emptiness, omitting to refer to details or even to take notice of trifling undulations, even as we describe a country as being as flat as a billiard-table, well knowing the simile to be more expressive than accurate.

It may be seen, then, that whilst the value of delineation may in some cases depend on its fidelity to fact, yet for the purposes of conveying to others the idea of a thing which has most impressed us, a considerable departure from exact fact may be distinctly advantageous, if not essential.

The Purpose of the Introduction.

Now I am purposing these introductory remarks as an argument in favour of those methods employed by the majority of the leading exponents of the application of photography to pictorial ends, which methods have been so strongly condemned with ridicule by those whose condemnation arises, as I believe, more from a misconception or misunderstanding of the motive and aim of such productions than from a logical disagreement.

Presently I shall endeavour to look at the subject from a more practical standpoint, and, as already promised, having ascertained the aims I shall try to show how they may best be attained.

If my foregoing parallels have sufficed to show that delineation, to be most communicative of ideas and impressions (not facts), *may* with advantage be not entirely accurate, I would then proceed to point out that accuracy of delineation depends for its very accuracy upon its fidelity to details.

Now I submit that if by a representation of any object or objects I wish to convey to others my impression of such objects or conditions, or to, as it were, interpret them in the manner they impressed me—not, mark you, to show what those objects and conditions were really like, but the ideas they prompted in me—then I shall probably do it best by a general outline, or by the portrayal of the chief items only, perhaps simultaneously exaggerating and distorting somewhat in order to serve my end; but I shall omit the details, partly because their introduction would not help the matter and partly because if the impression made upon me by the original scene was a very powerful one, then most probably I should have been unconscious of and be blind to petty details, my mind being pre-occupied by the force of the general effect.

It is not a question of what the eye sees or might see—detail was doubtless there if we stopped to look at it, and still more of it might have been discoverable had we sought longer; and moreover, to the mind of a man without much imaginative faculty, who is not easily or greatly moved by effects which might thrill the sensibilities of another, but one who instinctively rather investigates and analyses, details would perhaps strike and impress him before the general effect which had so absorbed and, so to speak, dazzled the other.

Thus both methods of delineating the same scene (either with or without detail—that is to say, in sharp focus and bright, and in uniform illumination, or out of focus and perhaps with details still further suppressed by deep shadow) may be equally correct *according to the motive*, or, what perhaps is almost the same thing, the temperament, of the producer.

Different Standpoints.

Now if the man who either admires nature for what he can find in her to wonder at or excite curiosity and prompt inquiry and investigation, looks at a painting which in its suppression of details does not satisfy this desire, it may be that he turns from it with indifference or accepts it as an example of fine art with which he has no especial sympathy—to him a museum is pleasanter than a picture-gallery.

If the same person sees a photograph which similarly does not record completely the details of nature, he, knowing that as a photograph it must be from nature and not a wholly imaginative work, not unreasonably condemns it.

He says, Here is a copy from Nature, made by a process which makes supreme accuracy possible, and yet it is deficient in complete accuracy. Hence he reasons it is a failure, and is bad.

He has not realised that the same motives which operated in the production of the painting which he tolerated may have been at work in producing this photograph. The person who, viewing a photograph in which, in order to render effectively some light-and-shade impression, detail and crisp outlines have been, it may be, intentionally subdued, says, "I cannot see things clearly. I want to have things more distinct," is but unconsciously giving expression to an instinctively investigating or inquisitive mind. He is seeking for daisies on a well-kept grass lawn from which they have been carefully eradicated, because their presence was not desired there, pretty and interesting though they be of themselves.

A picture, a pictorial rendering of anything, is not for every one, it is only for those who want it; but the man who does not want it and whom it does not please is not necessarily a more foolish man than he to whom it appeals, if he but have the wit to admit his lack of appreciation and allow that there may be those to whom it might be pleasing. Such an admission would be no confession of inferiority, and would be a more intelligent position than to condemn as bad and to ridicule everything not in accordance with his individual taste—as surely no man will say that all brunettes are ugly, his personal preference being for the blonde.

The Application of the Foregoing Principles.

If, then, we are prepared to endorse the foregoing very tolerant views, we shall be able to accept the conclusion that inasmuch as in a pictorial representation a personal and individual impression of a scene is all that is aimed at,

we may omit or we may exaggerate any portions if in so doing we can the better gain our end. In photography we can perhaps omit more easily than add, but our power of omission is chiefly limited to details, whilst the largely mechanical nature of the process compels us to a fidelity to general masses and such larger truths as our impressions are mainly dependent upon. In this there is perhaps as much cause for satisfaction as for regret.

But some exaggeration is also in like manner permitted us, to just such an extent as its evident violation of truth does not overwhelm the impression we desire to convey. Thus we may deepen shadows, we may increase the lights, and in other ways emphasize certain matters, so long as the emphasis or exaggeration does not *seem* unnatural.*

So long as the scientist, as well as the unthinking, compares a picture, be it photograph or otherwise, with nature to such a degree as to condemn any pictorial work *because* it is not true to nature, there will never be any right understanding between those who value photography for its scientific utility, and those who merely employ some of its powers for the interpretation of scenes as they felt them, not as they might, with careful scrutiny, have seen them to be.

Art does not try to copy or to imitate Nature.

And now one last word on this part of my subject to him who has found in the perfecting of the process of photography, *as a process*, a keen delight and fascinating pursuit. He is not justified in supposing that because a vocalist can compass say from middle C to the higher F, any song performed by that singer which includes less is proportionately a poor musical performance.

If he look at a work in which photography has been applied to certain pictorial ends and misses certain qualities of the process at which he, in his labours, has perhaps been at great pains to bring about, he is not to say this photograph is poor because the producer has not availed himself of such and such advances in technique.

A scale of music comprising two octaves has twelve tones, or fourteen notes, strings, or keys, and between the

* This matter is dealt with at greater length in Book II.

highest and lowest notes of that scale most musical airs will fall; and yet hardly one will be found to employ the full gamut of such octaves.

The average compass of the voice may be taken as an octave and a half. Is "Home, Sweet Home" or the National Anthem, or any other musical composition, to be despised because it only requires one or two notes over the octave, and hence does not include the full range of possible sounds or exhaust all the notes within ordinary boundaries?

Just as the man looking at a photograph in which the matter has been pictorially treated will be disappointed if he expects to find a faithful and comprehensive copy of Nature, so also will he who looks to see in every production in which photography has been employed a complete exhibition of the mechanical and scientific perfection to which the process has been brought as a duplicative method.

There are photographs of three kinds: those which marvellously reproduce every line and every fibre so that at our leisure we may study it, and learn more of the original than we could with unaided vision in its very presence; there are those which exemplify the highest possibilites of the process and stand as a *tour-de-force* of manipulative skill; and then there are those in which with deliberate intent the producer has selected just such properties of photography as seemed calculated to fulfil his designs, making use of, it may be, the very characteristic which in the other two instances the photographer has sought to abolish, turning to account for definite purposes what by the maker of a perfect photographic image would be deemed an imperfection and a fault.

Each of such three kinds of photography has a different purpose to fulfil; and assuming each to be equally successful in its particular sphere, then each should bear a different appearance, and the various results will be directly determined by the motive with which it has been set about; nor should the characteristics of any one be expected in any other.

At this point I may I think proceed to more practical considerations, dividing the subject under the headings Motive, Means, and Methods.

Practical Considerations.—Motive.

Whilst the chance spatterings of ink from a fallen pen may suggest familiar forms and figures, so it is possible that a clumsily made photograph may suggest ideas and act upon the imagination as forcibly as though it had been deliberately intended to so act, and the ideas prompted had been the Motive instead of the accidental result.

Obviously, however, the uncertainty of the outcome precludes such a course from serious consideration. A work, especially art work, must be considered good in proportion as the result obtained is a fulfilment of the intention. An intention or Motive, therefore, is essential to the making of a Picture.

Whilst the term picture is commonly used to signify a facsimile image of anything, we shall have to understand it in a much more restricted sense in the present subject of our study. I cannot lay too much stress upon this, that in art a picture is not essentially or only a representation of certain objects in nature.

If we look at an admittedly good picture—say, for instance, a great painting—it is possible that we instantly recognise it as representing certain natural objects; but if its effect upon us ends there we may be quite sure of one of two things; either we are approaching it with wrong expectations, or else this particular picture, and perhaps pictures generally, are not for us—we have not a natural taste or sympathy for pictures, just as some men do not care to read poetry, and are unmoved by music.

But in most cases it will probably be found that, quite apart from recognition, we shall be conscious of other feelings.*

I have not space to argue it here, and surely no argument is needed, to point the fact that a really great picture gives the beholder a sensation of pleasure apart from the fact that pretty or familiar objects, or pleasing scenes, are depicted.

Now this sensation of pleasure may be of varying character. It may be that we feel again the tremulous

* Instances given in Book II.

fleeting light which comes from the western horizon and spreads over the landscape, gilding the outlines and pouring like a glowing, warming flood into every portion, or the gladness of the summer sunshine sparkling in the tree-tops, glinting on the water full of life, richness, abundance, calling from out the cool shadows the summer breeze which rustles and bends the corn, then stilling it again, stifling it in a warm embrace as it passes into the shimmering distance.

Or there may be a pleasure of a more thoughtful kind in the grey stillness of dawn, or in the sense of dreariness and desolation of winter, a time for pensive thought and calm imaginings, a pleasure of a quieter, subtler order; or it may be the æsthetic senses are stirred by a representation of the beautifully moulded and symmetrical human form. Yet again one's sympathies may be stirred by the suggestion of more homely scenes, sorrow or suffering, noble sacrifices, or great deeds.

In every case let it be noted, and never forgotten, that the strongest part of a picture is the sensation and feeling which it creates, this being done through the agency of certain familiar objects more or less accurately depicted and represented with more or less completeness.

The MOTIVE, then, in all pictorial work is to convey some thought or idea or sensation by means of a chosen subject.

It may be that some scene in nature awakens some emotion, and we then endeavour to depict that particular scene and the objects it contains *in such a way* as to work upon the imagination of those who see our picture, so as to create in them the same feelings; or it may be that we first desire to give expression to certain sensations and then choose a subject which will best convey those feelings—in either case the motive is the same.

I will not dwell on this part of my subject a moment longer than I feel to be imperative; but I should probably leave more doubt than I hope to do were I not to refer to the fact that we must distinguish between the thoughts which the picture may promote, which also it was the artist's motive to create, and those which the beholder may arbitrarily attach to it. A beautiful landscape, say, of mountain and lake will *create* in the beholder thoughts

and feelings which he did not possess a moment before. Art has been creative of new ideas. But another beholder may at once gather round the picture of the mountain recollections of a previous excursion, and commence speculating on the altitude of the mountain and the difficulties of its ascent, mingled with the memory of a hundred happy experiences which have been called up by this representation; but these feelings have not been *created*, only thoughts and memories have been revived, and probably any picture of a mountain would have done as much—indeed, it needed not a work of art or a picture at all; the pages of a diary or a guide-book would probably have served nearly as well.

From the foregoing we might now formulate a maxim to the effect that art—that is, in our case, pictorial representation—employs *the image of concrete things to create abstract ideas.*

It is a matter of experience that a representation of anything which first and before all else impresses us with its startling likeness to the original, or sets us wondering at its exquisite execution, does not readily appeal to the imagination, and hence we must be content to confine ourselves to working out a single motive—that is, we should either be satisfied to produce graphic memoranda or records which remind us, and others, of events and scenes, or portray objects pictorially that we may create new sensations in others.

We may, if we choose, win applause for our skilful manipulation by producing a technically perfect photograph, or we may feel satisfaction at having used our photography for the production of an astonishingly truthful record, whilst again we may with perfect legitimacy employ that same process so as to carry to others feelings and sensations which cannot be depicted, but which we may be able to express in such a way that they will be understood by those who are naturally in sympathy with us.

If the reader has followed me thus far, it is quite possible he may be ready to say, "But how may this be done, considering the means at our disposal? Does not the very nature of the photographic process render the expression of the ideal all but impossible?"

The Means to be Employed.

I have endeavoured to show that all photographic productions naturally resolve themselves into, roughly, three classes, each having a distinct interest and prompted by a different Motive. In all, however, the Means employed are the same, the distinction in the result depending largely on the Method in which they are used.

Dismissing from our minds for a time the two classes which, as will be seen, have exclusively to do with the actual and real, and confining ourselves to that class of work to which this book is devoted and in which it is attempted to apply photography to the expression of the ideal, it may be well to consider what the means at our disposal really consist of, and whether at the outset there seems any likelihood of their being adequate to the performance of their task. It need hardly be said that before attempting to apply a process to a definite end which is not perhaps the purpose which those who made it had in view, it will be necessary to, or at least very desirable that we shall have attained some proficiency in its use, and a mastery of the tools which we may have to use.

I have already to some extent drawn parallels from paintings, and as it may be objected that in painting we have the assistance of colour, which is denied us in photography, let it be remembered that whilst, as a means of expression, colour is of extraordinary value, yet so potent is mere black and white that even painters sometimes elect to work in monochrome, and with a perfectly satisfying result; and I do not think the photographer need lament that he is denied the use of colours so long as we have before us such media as pencil, crayon, pen and ink, engraving, etching, mezzotint, etc., all of which are in their own way perfectly satisfactory in the hands of the artist as a means of expression and of appeal to the imagination.

Now let us notice that photography gives us unlimited power of rendering every gradation of light and shade between white and black; and as in music we use the term "tones" to signify degrees in sound between the highest

and lowest, so we speak of various degrees of lightness and darkness as "tones" which are "higher" or "lower" according as they respectively approach the high light, or white, and the deepest shadows, or black.

Next photography gives us the power of faultless drawing —that is to say, we can without tuition portray any form to which we direct the camera and lens.

Given, then, the power to portray and to produce the whole range of tones of which the eye can take cognisance, it might reasonably be supposed that everything can be done which is possible to any monochrome method. If with pencil or brush I set about producing a sketch or picture, I first seize upon the objects which strike me most forcibly, and I put into my drawing just as much as I think necessary to convey whatever meaning or idea I wish: subsequently I fill in the rest of the view, with perhaps less fastidious exactness, so that the thing shall not possess an unfinished appearance. Yet when all is done an immense amount of detail has still been omitted as of no importance.

In this respect, however, photography differs. It is indiscriminating and sets down not only what we feel would convey the desired impression, but everything else, with equal completeness. Thus photography is not lacking in means of expression; its fault is its redundance; it gives us too much, and it is for us to as far as possible restrain it and control its action.

Similarly at each stage of the process the same control is to be exercised, in order that every part of the final picture may be, not as the mere mechanical process would give it, but as we, the producers, wish it.

It might be expected that in this part of my subject some description should be given of Apparatus and materials, as constituting the Means employed. I would, however, rather leave these matters to such Handbooks and technical articles as may deal with the implements and appurtenances of the craft, because no special apparatus is needed in Pictorial work, and I have assumed that the reader has already attained some fair amount of proficiency in photographic practice; and we may now pass to the consideration of the Methods as well as the Means which we may resort to, to fulfil our Motives.

Methods.—The Practical Application of Means to the End.

Bearing in mind the somewhat obstinate and uncompromising character of the Means to be employed, we may conveniently consider the photographer's Methods of bending these means to his will under the headings: Selection, Manipulation of the Lens, Printing and the Control of the Print, Development of the Plate and Preparation of the Negative.

In selecting our subject, whether in order to produce a picture which shall be expressive of some predetermined idea, or whether in selecting the best point of view of a particular scene or objects so as to convey the feeling or impression which it makes upon us at the time, there are two factors which it should be borne in mind are essential, and these are Expression and Composition.

Of the former a good deal has already been said; but what of the latter?

It may be said that in everything the eye calls for a greater or less amount of symmetry or design. We see this in the commonest details of daily life, on our tables, in our houses, in buildings, and elsewhere; hence, as the angle of view of the lens only includes a limited field, we should naturally seek to include such a part, or select such a view, as shall contain various objects symmetrically grouped. But selection does not end here. It must be remembered that a picture is an arbitrary abstraction of a little piece of the whole view, and is bounded by the four enclosing sides much the same as a window.

Now, if we look out of the window, and objects we desire to look at are satisfactorily within the view enclosed by the window-frame, we rest content; but if not, we may move the head or crane the neck so as to see a bit more. As we have not the same opportunity when looking at the picture when finished, the greater need to get so much of the view within the area of the picture *as shall leave no desire to see a little more on either side.*

If this is done discreetly a person looking at the picture is *unconsciously satisfied, and for the time is oblivious of*

the fact that the picture is only a little piece selected from all the wide panorama, and forgets that there was anything else in the world worth looking at.

It follows from this that the principal object in the scene, not necessarily the largest or most interesting, but that upon which the sentiment and the effect chiefly depends, should be somewhere near to the centre of the picture. On looking at a picture the eye is immediately arrested by the more conspicuous items, such as high lights, small, deep shadows, or any forms which are unusual or which seem to separate themselves from the rest; and if any such are allowed to come close to the edge of the view included, the eye is attracted thereby to the edge of the picture, and becomes at once conscious of the arbitrary boundary which it might otherwise have forgotten.

It might almost go without saying that in all great works there should be one chief and dominant idea; singleness of purpose or Motive goes far towards securing success; and equally in design or composition such as we are considering, a one chief and principal feature is preferable to more than one, each or all of equal importance.

For the moment we are only concerning ourselves with composition or design, which I have described as one of the two essential factors in a picture; and therefore, apart from the fact that if the chief idea of the work centres upon some object, that alone may give it importance, care should be taken that not only its more or less central position, but the relative positions of other objects, should assist in giving predominance to that one point.

Let us take some example:—

Imagine Fig. 1 to be a finished picture, and then, closing the eyes, open them again, and looking at this picture you will find that the eye is almost simultaneously arrested by the houses on the left, the shipping on the right, the bridge in the middle, and the buoys and figure in the foreground. Here, then, we have what may be termed a disturbing composition, in which the eye wanders restlessly from one point to the other. Compare this with Fig. 2, in which from first to last the eye and the interest rests on the group of houses, and nothing seems to draw it away, except that now the buoys bring our notice to the extreme lower margin, a dis-

advantage disposed of in Fig. 3. This is a first consideration in composition.

FIG. 1.

FIG. 2

It will be noticed that in order to secure this better composition two or three objects of interest have had to be omitted, and one can easily suppose that to include the fishing-smack and the buoy and figure all in the same plate might be a strong temptation; but here self-restraint must be exercised—a view may include any number of interesting facts, may constitute a whole catalogue of important and pretty items, and so be valuable as a view or

as a record; but it would utterly fail as a *pictorial* composition.

Supposing Fig. 3 to be the view chosen, there are some points to be noticed. Observe that the winding lines of the shore have been made use of—that is to say, the fact of those lines falling as they do may have been sufficient to decide our selecting the view. They, as it were, lead the eye from the lower edge of the print towards the principal object, and at the point led to there is a streak of light, which further assists in retaining the attention. The horizontal line which indicates the base of the wall might promote a feeling of the picture being divided into two portions, and would draw the eyes to look left and right—this effect is somewhat overcome by the old posts which cut into and so break this line. In Fig.3, however,a further improvement is effected by cutting out the objects in the extreme foreground which unduly attracted the attention and drew interest away from the central area of the picture. Next notice that the principal mass which attracts the eye is not *quite* in the centre, and designedly so. Why? Some writers on composition give diagrams to show that the exact centre of a picture is the weakest point, and argue that therefore the principal object should not be placed there. This may serve as a rule perhaps, but inasmuch as we do sometimes meet with a picture in which the chief object is found in the centre, and is still satisfactory, I prefer to explain the matter as follows.

FIG. 3.

It is an acknowledged canon that in artistic matters the art should not betray itself—that is to say, in composition for instance, there should be *no appearance of the thing*

having been planned. Let the intention to secure a symmetrical arrangement once be self-confessed, and it immediately seems artificial.

The composition may be ever so carefully worked out, but it must appear unconsciously done. And so it will be best in most cases to *depart slightly* from precise and symmetrical arrangement, as though unintentionally, lest the endeavour to obey artificial rules betrays itself. Suppose we have three boats, we might perhaps be able to arrange them as in Fig. 4, which would certainly be symmetrical,

FIG. 4.

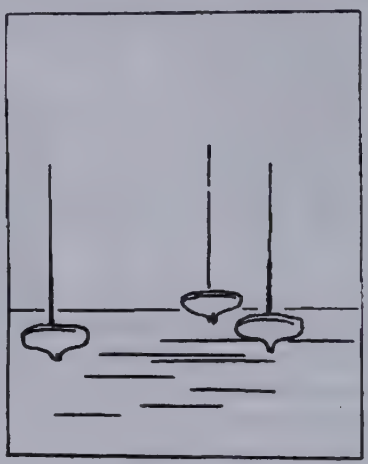


FIG. 5.

but in Fig. 5 the same end is gained, in that we yet have an orderly group, but it no longer strikes one as being such.

For this reason I would carefully avoid laying down definite rules or giving diagrams to work to as patterns, because the beginner would be very likely to betray in his work the evidence of working to a pattern. It may also be noticed that in saying that Expression and Composition are the two essential components of a picture I have placed Expression first; and I have done this because, whilst good Composition is by no means to be neglected, yet if the expression or sentiment of the picture be very finely done, then I think so long as we avoid *bad* composition I do not know that we need go further; indeed, if the sentiment

suggested by the picture be only powerful enough, we might almost ignore the rules of composition as generally taught, for if the expression be forcible enough it might absorb the beholder to the extent of making him unconscious of the composition.

The relative positions of objects in a view, as also the objects themselves, all more or less resolve themselves into or suggest lines, and it is by choosing one subject or one point of view, so that those lines combine in a manner pleasing to the eye, that a good composition is primarily secured. Thus in Fig. 6, should it so happen that the lines of the shore and the old mooring-post seem to repeat the lines suggested by the group of houses and the sea wall, giving the whole a one-sided appearance, then we must change our point of view; and if by so doing we can get something like Fig. 7, now it will be seen that new lines in the foreground compensate or balance the others, and the roof on the left balances the principal mass without, however, detracting from its importance. As a further example, and still having chiefly the question of the composition of lines in our mind, let me recount an instance from actual experience.

FIG. 6.

FIG. 7.

In Fig. 8 we have a sketch of a certain small river port, Woodbridge, as I first saw it. Looking across a bend of the river, the primitive wharfe and piers were seen against a glowing western sky and appeared as an irregular dark mass, over which, in varying degrees, the warm haze spread

like a transparent veil. The form of the masses, the masts of the schooner alongside, made a sufficiently symmetrical and well-balanced group to please the eye, and the broad

FIG. 8.

river was at the flood and reached to my feet in an unruffled sheet, reflecting the beautiful colours of the clear evening sky; but there was a feeling of separation; there

FIG. 9.

was nothing to lead the eye to the principal masses, which seemed to stretch across the field of view like a dark band, dividing it in two. This I knew would not do. Change of position did not improve matters, for if I included the

bank of the river the relative positions of the roofs, etc., changed, and a good deal of them no longer came into the field of view. I gave it up for that time.

FIG. 10.

FIG. 11.

My second visit was early in the day, and the river was again at high tide. Now the light was in a different direction and the wharves and piers were just very common-

place affairs, every detail of which stood out clear and bright (Fig. 9). The sentiment, the feeling, was gone, and had I seen the place like that at first I should probably never have troubled to make a second visit, unless, indeed, I had simply wanted a good recognisable view of Woodbridge quay, which I did not.

That day, by the time the sun had gone round to the position in which I first saw it, and which converted the ugly and uninteresting buildings into beautifully expressive masses of light and shade, the river's rapid tide had ebbed and begun to flow again, and the consequence was something like Fig. 10, the immediate foreground being occupied by a bank of mud and shingle which the flowing tide would shortly submerge; and whilst this bank certainly filled up some portion of the blank space of water it seemed to form a dark mass which arrested the eye at a spot close to the base of the picture, and so, as it were, interrupted the attention being drawn to the principal subject of the picture.

Yet another visit was made—this time at evening when the tide was low; and now the arrangement of lines was totally changed—the foreground being composed mainly of ridges of mud and sand, with little channels and pools of water; these by their form seemed to make a winding path, along which the eye was invited to travel; the dark mass of shadow no longer cut the picture in two, because the shadow was continued downwards in the partly exposed river bed until it gradually became broken up into spaces of light and then separated in graceful curves (Fig. 11).

No doubt remained in my mind that the composition had been worth the waiting for, and the picture "Woodbridge Quay" was made. In order to give full opportunity to those foreground lines the shape of the picture was changed, and as will be seen clouds were subsequently printed in; but that is a story for another chapter.

But one may say, "I should rather photograph beautiful rippling water than streaks of mud and shining sand." Very likely, and if you want to photograph water, do so by all means; but do not suppose that because, with a natural British instinct, we most of us experience a sense of pleasure at a broad expanse of water, that water is

of itself and under all circumstances picturesque. What, after all, are the pleasant feelings which the mere sight

"WOODBRIDGE QUAY."

of water call up? Is it not a recollection of past experiences—boating, swimming, or some such memory? If you had never seen or heard of water before, what then?

Is it its brightness, smoothness, transparency, silent flowing, and the fresh, invigorating breeze, which makes you love the water? If so, then remember that these attributes are actual physical facts, which may *awaken* feelings and memories, or associated ideas, but do not *create* new ones.

It matters not whether the desired lines forming the composition are ridges of mud, channels in beaten gold, a sheep-track through the meadow, metal tram-lines, or a silvery stream of limpid water. As long as we photograph things *because* they are customarily regarded as pretty, or because they interest us, as long as we photograph things or abstain from photographing according to what they *are*, so long also shall we go on photographing things in a way which will interest ourselves or please others in proportion as we are able to recognise the objects or feel interested because we know them to be records of facts; but we shall progress but little towards the expression of ideas by means of our pictures.

A photograph of a sheet of water done in what we may term the ordinary way, supposing there were no such thing in the world as water, would not interest us—we should not know what it was meant for. Is it not a fact that 99 per cent. of average photographic views or portraits are valueless if we do not know what or where or who they represent, or, in the absence of such knowledge, we still know that, being photographs, they do represent something which had an existence and hence may promote curiosity? But still the interest is founded on the fact that they represent something real, and so their value is not *in themselves*, but *outside*.

To make this matter clearer, look at any great painting. Is the first interest which it stirs a desire to know *where* the scene is? If a marine subject, do you feel very curious to know if it represents the English Channel or the North Sea? If a figure or a head (exempting, of course, portraits for the present) are you not satisfied with the sentiment of the picture, without asking who was the model? In the case of such pictures as "The Blind Fiddler" (Wilkie) "The Doctor" (Luke Fildes) "Bath of Psyche" (Leighton) "The Soul's Awakening" (Sant)—I am purposely citing *popular*

pictures—does any one want to know the *names* of the individuals there depicted or the exact locality the picture was taken from? In all probability the figures and scenes are fiction.

As a matter of fact, the majority of pictures are from nowhere. Even landscapes, though they bear the names of places, such as "On the River So-and-so," "Near Such a Place," etc., are not true to the details of the scene, but are largely imaginative, built up or founded upon fact.

In support of this view let it be asked, If the charm of a picture depend on the *actual* nature or beauty of the things represented, how is it that pictures so full of charm are painted from scenes in our foulest city rivers, the very barges and figures and all else being filthy and noisome?—for instance Mr. Wyllie's Thames pictures and many another. Is it not rather that, amidst all the grime and smoke, there are forms, there are contrasts of light and shade, capable of making us *feel* as the spick-and-span primness of a park ornamental water cannot do.

I do not know whether my reader will feel the importance of all this, but I must ask him to pay very particular attention to it, because we shall at a later stage have occasion to refer back to it, as also to the following, which is largely borrowed from the writings of a distinguished painter. The *dignity* of the snow-capped mountain—that is the *feeling* with which it impresses us—is lost when it is very distinct, but the joy of the tourist is to recognise the traveller on the top. The desire *to see for the sake of seeing* is with most people the only desire to be gratified; hence the delight in detail. And when evening mist, or it may be wreathes of poisonous smoke, clothes the river side and veils the buildings, so that what they are cannot be seen, the meanest buildings, the tall chimneys, and the warehouses, might be campanili and palaces—"the whole city hangs in the heavens and fairyland is before us."

And to get back to my "Woodbridge Quay"—knowing that it is full of faults and recognising that the half-tone reproduction given here has knocked out of it what little feeling I may have managed to secure in the original: still, it may serve as an example; and the lines in the foreground are sufficient, whatever they are composed of. I needed

those lines, and that light and shadow, and whether it was the foul mud at the river's bed or anything else that furnished them matters not.

If one did not know from experience that the bed of a tidal river is usually muddy, and if you did not also know that mud is an unpleasant fact when too close at hand, the picture would not tell it you. You are judging it from your knowledge of facts, not from the impression or the effect it has when seen either in nature or on paper.

In such a set of instances as I have given, doubtless the painter might have got over a difficulty which the photographer could not. In the case of the first visit (Fig. 8) by darkening the water in some portions he might have prevented the group of buildings and quay from seeming to cut the picture in two, and then across the water he could have drawn such streaks and winding lines of ripples, a flight of field-fares in their characteristic mode of flying in a line, or in some such manner have accomplished what the photographer must needs wait for nature to do for him. Hence SELECTION in photography, or at least in landscape and some other branches of work, often takes the place of what in painting becomes voluntary COMPOSITION.

Of course there must be many occasions when change of position, or waiting for light or tide or what not is of no avail: there are many instances in the memory of all of us when nature would not meet our wishes, and presently I hope to show how then we must proceed to compel our facsimile of unwilling nature to comply with our wishes; but for the present we must be content to say that if we cannot get what we think desirable, then that particular subject must be abandoned, for let it be remembered that if we are ever so fond of the spot, be it ever so famous, or quaint, or interesting, these things are of no importance as a *picture*. In order to convey an expression of an abstract idea, founded mainly on the effect of light, shade, and atmosphere, we select our objects for this purpose; then the objects themselves and for themselves are of no importance, be they fairest flowers, stateliest trees, dingiest wharves, dainty cottages, or grimy barges—no matter what their nature, if they form a pleasing design and serve as

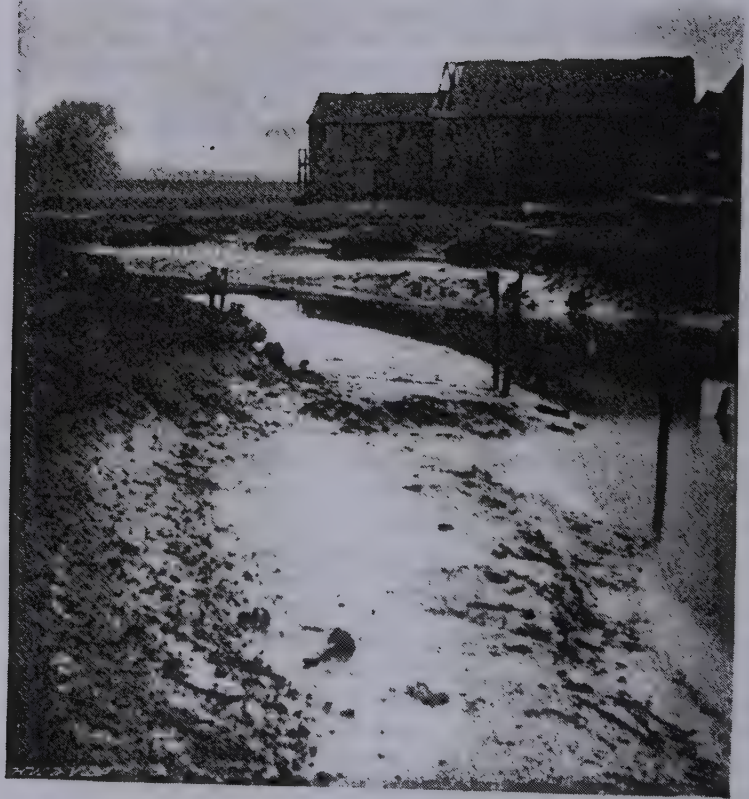
means to express the varying phases of light and shade, that is the only purpose for which we require them. Hence a landscape, a figure, a group, is only a means to an end, and a chisel or a hammer or other instrument can but serve its purpose as a Means to an end; whether it is valuable because it was used by Peter the Great or curious for the quaint ornament upon its handle, it is a chisel or a hammer still, and as a Means to an end is of no more value than the plainest of modern manfactures. I have purposely put this rather emphatically because whilst of course in some pictures the daintiness and beauty of the objects themselves may please us, I want to insist that such source of pleasure is of so little importance and so non-essential that we may have a supremely beautiful picture in which the objects composing it are not in themselves possessed of beauty or interest.

If we are to select our subjects or arrange our groups with a pictorial motive we must absolutely and entirely sacrifice every other consideration, and be prepared to cut out of our composition the prettiest and most interesting item, if by so doing composition pure and simple is improved. And if some subject you are attached to will not admit of composition or will not admit of your treating it pictorially, then photograph it if you wish, but never suppose that it will form a *picture*.

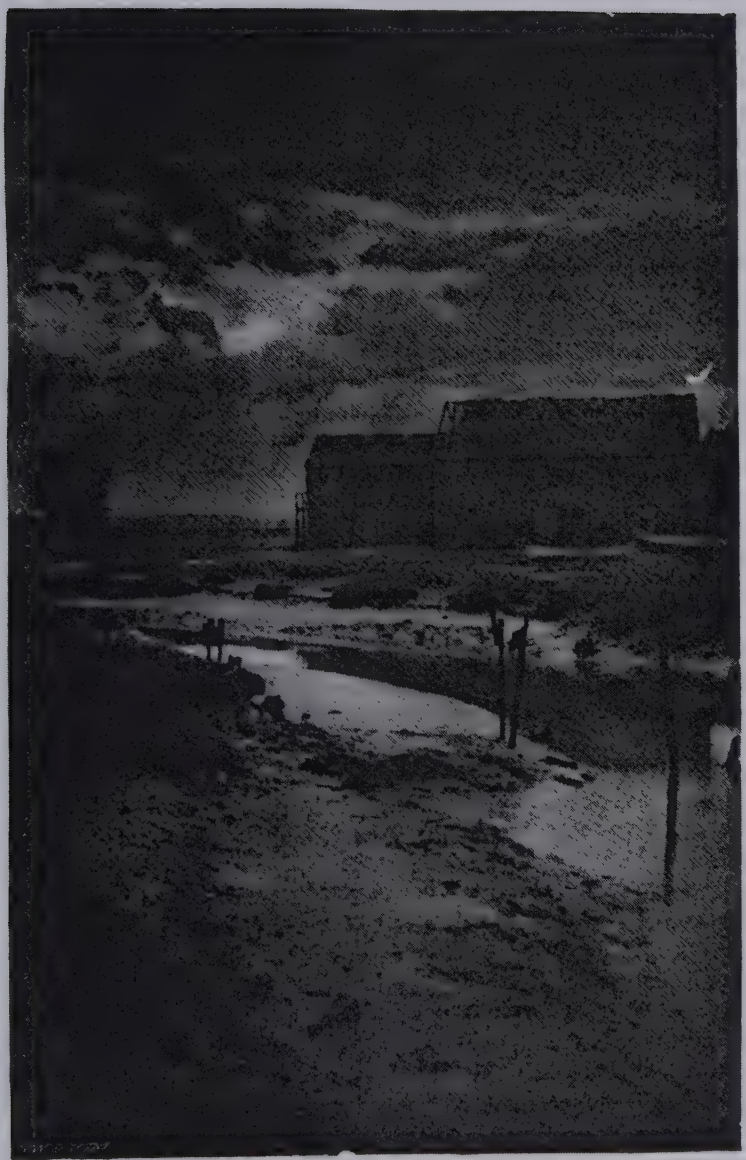
Expression and Composition.

It will be remembered that I have pointed out that in a good picture there are two essential factors, Expression and Composition. We might select a scene from nature which, as regards the arrangement of its parts, the harmonious combination of its lines, and so forth, formed a faultless composition; it is yet conceivable that our representation might utterly fail to arouse any other feeling in the beholder than a bare recognition of a symmetrical and well-designed copy of such particular scene. It would be a representation of physical facts, but might fail to express or suggest any of those abstract ideas which constitute the essential expression of a picture.

In contrast to this, as previously hinted, we can imagine



"A DESERTED SHORE." (*First Print.*)



"A DESERTED SHORE." (*Finished Picture.*)

a picture in which the expression of some idea and the stirring of sympathetic feeling, might be accomplished, even in the presence of a far less perfect composition. Indeed, the feeling which it is intended the picture shall convey may be told in so telling a manner as to make one oblivious for the time as to whether the composition is good or not, so long as the composition is not so distinctly bad as to outrage one's natural sense of design or in some way attract and disturb one's attention. Hence I have suggested that some knowledge of the propriety of composition is desirable, not so much that all our pictures may be surpassingly well composed as that we may keep safely clear of bad composition.

The man who at once impresses as being so very well dressed or so studiously well behaved is not so desirable as he who in appearance or manners is merely void of reproach. Even justice, charity, and humility, are no longer virtues when too self-assertive.

How Expression may be Given to a Picture.

The Expression in a picture depends chiefly on the relative degrees of light and shade of its various portions, and also upon the manner in which objects are represented, especially as regards the amount of detail introduced.*

Take as an example the reproduction given here, in which it was desired to convey the idea of the drifting rain-storm, with the fitful gleams of sunshine lighting up the water whilst the dreary landscape is enveloped more or less in the passing cloud shadow. Compare it with the second print made from the same scene—it is not only the absence of the cloud, which is a strong feature in the former representation, but is there not a good deal dependent on the light and shade in the landscape portion? Again, imagine what would have been the result had the position of the sun been changed and all the foreground of the second example brightly lighted; then the difference would have been greater still.

An instance of the change brought about by the altera-

* See numerous references in Book II.

tion of the light was given on page 22, Figs. 8 and 9, in which the morning light no longer made the scene desirable.

If you will consider for a moment you will, I think, be able to agree that nature does not always and under all conditions appeal to our feelings or emotions—or at least, some phases appeal very much more powerfully than others. nature, therefore, is not always suitable for the making of a picture, in which, as has been said, sentiment and emotion are essential, and hence our task is to seek for and choose those phases which do so appeal to our feelings.

I suppose most people are impressed when in the presence of a beautiful landscape, seen in the stillness of a summer's evening, or a desolate seashore in the grey twilight of dawn, or amidst the wild tumult of storm; and the feelings awakened are something apart from the interest in the actual locality or the surrounding objects, and hence it is not difficult to imagine that the same person who on such occasions as mentioned may have felt a deep thrill, might visit the same scenes under different conditions and fail to be moved beyond the mere sense of enjoyment in fresh air and sunshine, which might have been equally enjoyed anywhere else.

Inasmuch as we cannot compel climatic changes we cannot at will call down the shades of evening, or summon the scudding storm-clouds, or command the inrushing sea, or the delicate mists which hover mysteriously at the coming of dawn, it follows that we must wait upon nature to give us the opportunities we need.

The prettiest or most interesting prospect may lack the conditions which awaken our emotions, and, lacking the essentials of the picture, must be passed by.

The painter may make a sketch of a scene because the composition alone pleases him, and then he may subsequently introduce an effect of light and shade, an impression which he remembers having received in another place; but the photographer must wait until nature itself offers both these favourable conditions simultaneously, unless, as I hope to show in a future chapter, the photographer can modify and alter in his print or picture the unsuitable effect into a suitable one.

But for the present I am only dealing with selection, in which I trust I have now made it clear nature itself must meet us fully half-way.

To sum up then, and to put it into slightly different form, it is not the facts in nature that the good picture aims at portraying, but the effects of light and shade accompanied by a pleasing arrangement.

But suppose we find a scene in Nature which is full of beautiful feeling, and sufficiently complies with what has been suggested as the principal rules of Composition, does it follow that we shall be able to reproduce the scene by photography in such a way that our picture will in its turn convey to others the same feelings which the original awakened in us or which we wish it to?

Photography itself may err by inaccurately rendering the relative tones in Nature. Then we shall have to ask, What is "Tone"? and shall, I hope, presently see the importance of studying it.

However skilfully done the picture will hardly succeed in giving again the whole impression of Nature, so that it may be necessary to exaggerate or emphasize some facts or features.

If in the last case it be deemed necessary to emphasize some effects in the picture, or if further we desire to import some effect from memory or imagination which was not present at the particular time, how far may this be done, and by what means?

The consideration of these points will bring us mainly to deal with the picture itself—the print.

The Photographic Print.

To talk about the print, which is the last stage in the photographic process, thus first may seen reversing the usual order of procedure; but we must bear in mind that we are regarding photography merely as being applied to a certain end, and whether it be the manipulation of the lens or the development of the plate, or any other part of the process, every step must be taken with the final picture in view; and until we have succeeded in getting a very clear idea of the essential character of the picture, we shall not

be able to use our plates and lenses and other preliminaries so as to best produce such character.

It has been just said that photography may err in its rendering of the tones in nature when it becomes necessary to ascertain what is meant by the term "tone," and we shall see why it is important that tone should form the object of very careful study.

That photography does make grave mistakes has probably become abundantly evident to the least experienced photographer; but it is to be feared that many a one takes but little trouble to ascertain the fact, or cares much when the error is discovered.

Probably all my readers are aware that certain colours, when photographed, do not preserve their relative lightness or darkness as compared with other objects in the view. Thus, for instance, red, and orange, and green, photograph dark, whilst bright blue comes lighter. One might imagine a mass of bright blue flowers with a green background which appear as dark flowers on a lighter background, and our photograph would give the reverse arrangement. There are many instances in pictorial work in which such an error might have inconveniently serious effects; and whilst the correct rendering of colours in their relative values, as they appear to the eye, is one of great importance, it is to be accomplished more by mechanical means than by any special personal effort.

What are known as isochromatic plates are now available to all, in addition to which my own experience leads me to strongly advocate a yellow screen behind the lens, or between the two combinations.

The length of exposure which such methods necessitate is by no means as great as seems generally supposed, and since, even without resorting to plates of very high speed, shutter exposures can be made out of doors, I fail to see what more is required.

There are many who will say that with careful development an ordinary thickly coated plate will do all that an Isochromatic plate will. This may be so, but I am inclined to think too many do not quite appreciate what colour-correction in landscape work really means.

Closely involved with the question of colour values, and,

indeed, inseparable from it, is that of "tone"—not, of course, tone as the term is used by photographers to indicate that of colour, as when we speak of "toning" a silver print, but in the sense in which the artist uses it; and in pictorial work there is no more important subject.

It is possible that the photographer may resent having a study such as this imposed upon him, inasmuch as he will say he has not the power of the artist to achieve right or wrong tone; but he forgets that unless he has learnt when the tones of a picture are right or not, he will not know whether his work is good or bad, nor know what to try and overcome in future.

It is the knowing, when a work is done, whether it is right or wrong that constitutes the main strength of the pictorial student, and it is the absence of this knowledge which is at the foundation of nearly all the bad photography one sees.

To show how important such knowledge is, let us take a very simple set of examples.

Notice the relative lightness and darkness of a person's face and the white collar round the neck, assuming both to be equally illuminated; then, quite apart from colour, you may note that the face is darker than the white linen. If now that individual move from a lighted position into shade, you will notice that the "tone" of *both* becomes lower, that is less light, but the *relative* tone may remain the same, whilst very likely the relative colour values change. Now look at an average portrait of head and shoulders—the kind of portrait which is turned out by the dozen for five shillings by a man who has had no artistic training—and you will probably find that the relative degree of lightness and darkness between flesh and white linen is altogether false, and as a consequence to an educated eye the whole looks chalky and unnaturally white; also, on the shadow side of the face (if there is one), and in the shadows of the features, there is not the amount of difference that we noticed in the individual whose face we studied first. Here is obviously an inaccurate rendering of relative tones. Now look up a photograph in which some figures are seen against a strong light—perhaps a rustic group with the sun shining behind them. "Oh," some one says, "how dark the faces are! They look like niggers." Well, now take an opportunity of studying

such a group from life, and notice particularly the "tone," the degree of lightness and darkness of the faces, seen against the light. If you cannot carry the thing in your eye, then make with pencil and paper an exact copy in shading of the "tone" of the faces and of the clothes, etc., and then compare it with the tones of the picture in which "they look like niggers," and you may be surprised to find that those dark faces are nearly, or perhaps quite, correct.

A very striking example of how photographers allowed photography to falsely render relative tones is seen in the skies of nearly all photographs until the last few years.

If you look at a view in which there is a white cottage in strong light, or any other white objects, and then compare the relative "value" or tone of the sky, even a light blue cloudless sky, you will notice that the blue is relatively darker than white; and yet photographers were content to make all skies quite white *until they were taught to see the mistake*, and then they learnt what to try and avoid.

To show how exceedingly ignorant most of us are as to relative tone, let us take one or two examples. Say we are required to draw the figure of a man in open-air light, in a black coat. Thoughtlessly we should perhaps start to make his coat black, because we preconceived it to be so; but look at such a figure in reality, and you will find that the folds and creases in the sleeves and elsewhere appear as *dark* lines, hence it is evident that the body of the coat cannot be black. A further striking example given as a test case to art students, and which my reader may like to try for himself, is that black velvet *in sunlight* is *lighter* than a white cloth *in the shade*.

A piece of white paper is lying in the road, and if we were to represent this we should probably make it as white. But presently the sun shines out, and instantly the white paper is much brighter and whiter. Obviously then it was not white before, when we thought it to be. We take people's portraits in the subdued light of a room or even in a studio, and represent their collars and cuffs as white as our printing paper will let us—how is this for accuracy when compared with our experiment of white paper in the roadway?

Such elementary knowledge as this is surely necessary

for the development of our plates and to guide us as to how far to carry our printing.

But when we come to the consideration of general out-door effects we find the subject of relative tones far more complicated and an inexhaustible field of useful study.

Take the following as an example :—

Suppose we have a dusty road with houses on either side. First note the tone of the road—it is light, and grey in colour. Near the gutter on one side of the street is a clean sheet of white paper. Compare the tone of this. Probably it is the lightest spot in the whole field of view. Then watch the street as the sun shines out from a passing cloud, casting the shadows of the houses all along one side, whilst the other side is in the full sunshine. Now consider for a moment. The shadow side has not become darker than it was before the sun shone, but that part where the sunlight falls unimpeded has become very much lighter, and makes the shadow side *seem* darker. But the white paper, which still remains in shadow, is no longer the highest light—the sunlit, dusty road has outstripped it. But let a shower of rain or a water-cart make the road wet, and the sunlit road comes lower in tone again, though perhaps not so low as it was before the sun shone. Meanwhile, probably the white paper has remained unchanged, and is now lighter than the *wet* road, even in sunlight.

Now look at the slate roofs of the houses and notice that looking *towards the sun* the slanting roof seems very dark against the blue sky, whilst where the *sun shines on it*, it may be as light, or even lighter, than the sky, except where there is a shadow cast by the chimney-stack the white chimney-pots on which are distinctly lighter than the sky ; but when the sun is covered they look darker than the sky, whilst the entire roof descends to the tone of the shadow of the stack, which therefore disappears.

Now these are but simple examples of relative degrees of light and shade, or tone, between certain objects, and I have given them here firstly in order to show the kind of training to which we should subject our perceptions in order to be able to tell when our pictures are or are not correct in tone, and secondly to suggest how very ignorant probably most people are who have not thought of these

matters; and yet people will boldly assert that this or that picture is not true to Nature, whilst it is more than probable that they could not tell you whether such and such tones were true or not—and on the correct rendering of tone is the truthfulness of impression dependent.

It must I think be fully evident that without some knowledge of this matter we might very easily get the relative tones in our picture quite false and never detect the fault.

It is to some extent a question of contrasts, and we know how an under-exposed plate will seem to give harder contrasts, whilst an over-exposed one will give the opposite extreme; and some intensify it—and without knowledge who shall say which is nearest to truth or at what particular intermediate shall we stop?

Tone and Atmosphere.

The examples we have been considering have all been objects close at hand. If we could now remove our standpoint, gradually walking backwards, we should find the differences of lightness and depth between the sunlit and shadow sides of the road (and other objects similarly) would gradually become less.

Dark objects become lighter and light ones darker as they become more distant. There are physical causes for this into which we need not enter here. Sufficient to say it is due to the intervening volume of atmosphere which is of course increased as the object becomes more remote, and so places a greater amount of atmosphere between it and ourselves.

This same atmosphere also softens the crispness of outlines until at length details become all but invisible, and extreme lights and darks meet in a uniform middle tone. It is this that gives us the feeling of distance. Look out over a wide expanse of country on an average day and see if this is not corroborated. Look again during a particularly clear day, with the east wind blowing, and do we not instinctively say, How *near* the distance seems?

If now we have a picture in which the distance seems to gradually melt into delicate grey, and we paint into the

distance a little *white* house or put in a little dark tree or tower, do not these objects immediately seem to come forward, to stand out, to appear near?—as for instance in the accompanying reproduction (Fig. 11 A).

Very great care should then be taken to see that distant objects are rendered so as to appear distant—that is, in correct relative tone when compared with the foreground or nearer portions.

The effect of distance thus produced is what is termed

FIG. 11 A.

Aerial Perspective. Now, as you probably are well aware, there is another kind of perspective, a knowledge of which is necessary in drawing (and some acquaintance with its rules may be advantageous in photography, as will appear presently).

You know that if you stand at one end of a straight wall the line forming the top and that indicating the base appear to converge as they recede until they meet, or would do so if the wall continued far enough. This point is called the vanishing point. At one hundred yards' distance a man six feet high is so much smaller than a six-foot man close to us: had there been a continuous file of men,

the lines formed by the tops of their heads and by their feet respectively would be gradually converging. This we may call Linear Perspective.

Now in aerial perspective we also have what we may call a vanishing point, inasmuch as if, for instance, the top of the wall were quite white and the base quite black these two would gradually approach each other in loss of intensity, the black growing lighter or greyer and the white becoming darker and therefore greyer until both meet in a common tint, both being in the same tone.

Here are some posts in which, apart from any question

FIG. 12.

of size or linear perspective there is no room for doubt that one and two are nearer than three, four, five and six, and this idea is conveyed merely by their relative degrees of lightness and darkness, and is due in nature to atmosphere. We may of course have abnormal conditions of atmosphere, when, as in the case of an east wind, as already cited, distance looks "so near," and whilst under those circumstances we may feel curiosity and wonder at being able to see, it is merely seeing for the sake of seeing and not to be mistaken for the pleasure inspired by a beautiful scene, as when we say of it, "How restful! how lovely! how grand!"

Under ordinary circumstances, then, we see everything

under the influence of atmosphere; but it is no unusual thing to see photographic representations of scenes in which somehow atmosphere seems to have been utterly ignored and distant objects are so clear and appear in the same tone as near ones, and the latter are only recognised as nearer on account of their size or position.

This may be partly due to exposure, but more particularly it is due to an indiscreet use of the lens and also to the unsuitable printing process employed, to all of which matters we shall return anon. Such photographic productions must be familiar to all of us in which the objects or planes do not fall one behind the other and in which the more remote portions do not seem to go back; and in such examples I think we shall have to admit that the character which in a picture may appeal to our feelings and imagination, is lacking. We may be able to see more, to learn more particulars concerning the place represented, but the poetry, the abstract beauty, we shall realise belongs chiefly to the presence of atmosphere which in such photographs has not been rendered—it might not have been sufficiently apparent as to constitute mist and haze, both beautiful in themselves, but present to a sufficient degree to prevent the different planes from, as it were, sticking together and appearing without perspective.

Aerial perspective may I think be said to be beautiful in itself, apart from the fact of its giving objects a natural appearance. Certainly distance, if well rendered, gives a sense of pleasure to most minds. It may not be easy to say why this is nor even necessary to account for it.

Mr. Ruskin might find in this pleasure an indication of spiritual hope and longing, as opposed to animal and present life. For my part it seems to me that in looking out on a widespread distance in Nature, and similarly in a picture, the eye and the imagination are, as it were, led on into the far-off, even as we listen to the gradually dying cadence of music as it becomes more distant, never quite sure when it has actually passed out of hearing. We fancy we hear it again and again, imagination bringing it momentarily back and following it to the vanishing point. The louder a sound is, the more we recognise it as

"MELTON MEADOWS."

being *near*; so the louder the "tone" of objects—that is, the blacker or whiter—the nearer they seem; and so if in our picture we wish to give a sense of distance, we must see that the darkest shadows and highest lights are in the foreground: and because we may not be able to materially alter things as the undiscriminating process gives them to us, we must seek for and select those scenes, those subjects, in which this arrangement of highest

FIG. 12 A.

and deepest tones do come in the foreground, and then take care that our process renders them with fidelity, so that we may not lose the sense of their nearness or the feeling of greater distance of other planes which it is intended they shall give. An example is here given (Fig. 12 A).

The necessity of becoming, as it were, steeped in a knowledge of this principle, so as to unconsciously work to it, will appear when we are actually at work, especially in landscape and similar subjects, where to a limited degree only we are able to arrange its parts. Because we select only a portion we arbitrarily cut out from the whole some

little bit which appeals to us. It is quite conceivable that in that small portion the relative darkness and lightness of objects do not so distinctly comply with the rule laid down.

Return for a moment to the sketch of the posts (p. 41) and suppose then that by chance 1 and 2 were posts of a grey colour, whilst 3 and 4, and 5 and 6, were respectively painted black and white—then perhaps, notwithstanding the greying effect which the distance may have had on 5 and 6, yet their actual local colour would still leave them as strong as the lighter-coloured posts, which were nearer—a circumstance which may defeat our endeavour to express distance.

In the former case we depend for the success of the impression on the general recognition that greyer objects are more distant, but we cannot explain to the beholder that certain posts or other objects are of such especial local colour that they do not look as distant as they are, and so we must resort to some trick, such as modifying print or plate so as to bring the black and the white post into the tone they would possess were they of more normal colour, or we may choose our standpoint so as to include some still nearer object which comes blacker still, and so throws everything else into distance and thus restore the harmony of relative tones which will explain itself to the beholder. This little bit of heterodoxy must, however, be accepted with caution, for it may be quite possible that by careful rendering of all else in the picture the obtrusive posts will explain themselves as black and white; it is only when the beholder is not likely to recognise the conditions that such especial precautions need to be taken.

I have explained this at some length because we have many similar cases in daily practice.

Thus a thick cluster of dark-foliaged fir-trees at a little distance may, in an otherwise light-coloured view, appear too dark, and so come too near unless full allowance be made for the actual local colour of the foliage itself; and even then it may be well if we can produce them a little lighter than they truthfully should be in order to emphasize or exaggerate the feeling of distance.

Probably all of us have experienced a like difficulty in a dark bank or shore on the opposite side of a space of water

—how dark it seems to come in our picture, and therefore how unnaturally near it seems; but photograph the same on a misty day, when atmosphere is palpably helping the effect of distance, and then we shall realise the powerful help that atmosphere is to us. (See reproduction below, and compare with "Peaceful Waters" on next page.)

It must be remembered that after all in making a picture we are endeavouring to set down on one plane various objects in such a way as to suggest an infinitude of varying planes, and hence we are justified in selecting such con-

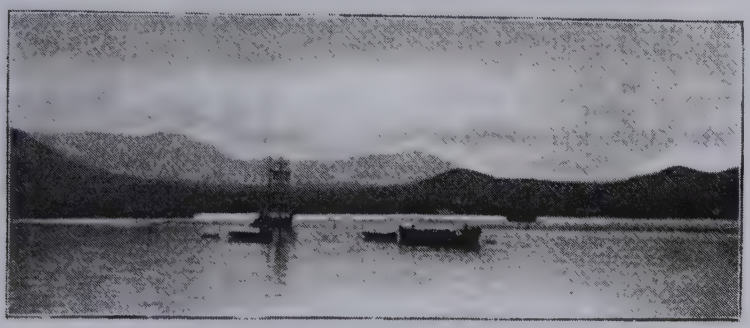
"BENFLEET."

ditions of nature as shall help us to give *the impression of truthfulness*, even though it be not in particular cases absolutely true to fact.

If nature in a caprice presents itself in a condition unsuitable for pictorial representation, our knowledge and judgment will prompt us to select some other scene or some other time of day, when the conditions are more favourable. Without by any means insisting on it as a rule, I might at least suggest that when the atmosphere is heavily charged with moisture or when the sun is in such a position as to make the veiling atmosphere particularly apparent, we are more likely to meet with success, and then we have

yet a further resource—namely, in producing our print by controlling the light action in such a way as to give us what may not have been present in nature at the particular time; but then most certainly will it be necessary for us to have acquired by frequent study of every condition of light and shade and weather, a very accurate knowledge of what nature might have been on a favourable occasion, lest in our artificial production of effects we exceed physical possibility and our exaggeration is betrayed by its evident falsehood.

I have now dwelt so long on this part of my subject that I will defer reference to general tonality, as it is effected by the sky, for a chapter specially devoted to



"PEACEFUL WATERS." [*By* M. F. ASTELL.

Sky and Clouds, and will conclude with a note which may come here as an appendix.

Tone must be clearly distinguished for tint which in monochrome is equivalent for local colour. Thus as my hand rests on my white paper, my hand is darker than the paper. This is a question of relative colour value, but flesh and paper are both in the same tone, and the shadow side of my hand is in the same tone as the shadow on the paper, where it may be noted the difference in relative values is not the same as where both flesh and paper are in the light. But the actual tint or value of paper and hand would change if seen from a distance, and hence, strictly speaking, tone is the relative lightness and darkness due to the effect

of light governed by atmosphere, and has nothing to do with the relative lightness and darkness or relative value with which various colours appear when compared with each other.

The View Meter.

Before passing to the consideration of the use of the lens in pictorial work, and as I want to make these chapters as practical as may be, there are two matters which may be named as influencing the good composition

Fig. 13.

or selection of our picture. The first is what is known as a view-meter; the second matter refers to the trimming down of the print when it is finally made.

It is often singular to notice how unconscious the eye often is of objects within the field of view which do not interest it; and thus a photograph, when made without full and careful examination of the focussing screen, may astonish us as including or containing features we do not remember to have seen in the original. It may be that whilst looking at a view we do not notice that certain overhanging branches of some trees close at hand protrude into the field of view. The fact is the eye so easily adapts

itself that we can turn our attention and thoughts from such intrusive objects and, ignoring their presence, enjoy the scene just as well as though they were not there.

In such case as this a view-metre of simple construction will show us at once whether anything we do not want comes within the field.

The other case in which a view-metre is serviceable is when it is used to assist the eye to separate a given subject from its surroundings.

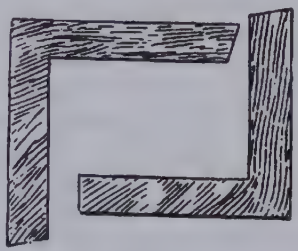


FIG. 14.

It is not always easy, when looking at all the vast variety of objects in Nature's panorama, to tell at once how any one part of it will look when detached from all the rest, and merely as an assistance to the eye in this respect a simple rectangular frame, made in metal, wood, or even cardboard, will be very helpful. It will partake of the form of a cut-out mount, the opening having its length and breadth in the same relative proportions as the two sides of the plates one usually uses. (Fig. 13.)

Thus if we are using whole plates, then we shall have a frame or view-metre, with an opening $4\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ and the margin all round about 2 inches deep.

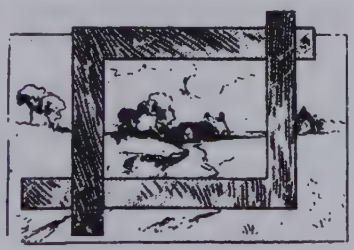


FIG. 15.

Then, when selecting our picture we merely hold it in front of one eye, the other being closed so as to include within the cut-out centre the principal objects or group, which will then appear as in a frame. The nearer it is to the eye the shorter the focus of the lens to be used to include just that area; the farther we remove it the longer focus lens must we use, or else the more shall we have to trim off our print after we have made it, so as to only leave the narrow-angle view.

As an assistance in selecting from the whole print just

that portion which is worth preserving, it may be well to have always at hand either four broad strips of stout brown paper or cardboard or two pieces forming a right angle. (Fig. 14.)

Placing these upon the finished print so as to form a sort of frame for the portion which seems most desirable, we may shift them about, alternately enclosing a larger or smaller portion, until we make up our minds.

With these strips laid upon the face of the print as in Fig. 15, place the whole at a little distance or pin it on a wall—give it the utmost consideration and deliberation, and then run a pencil round the inside edge of the temporary frame and remove the print for trimming.

This relentless trimming down of the print after we have had the trouble of making it, is perhaps one of the most difficult tasks to reconcile oneself to. It is hard at times, after having brought off a good print 15 × 12 to find that, for the purposes of good composition, it must be cut down to perhaps 8 × 6; but if by retaining the whole we only have an unsatisfactory composition, and the whole print, be it never so perfect or interesting, is of no pictorial value, we had better cut it down unsparingly if then we get a picture, even though it be only a small one.

The Use of the Lens in Pictorial Work.

Remembering now all that has been said in the foregoing with reference to the motive which underlies pictorial work, and also the necessity of rendering tone, we have now to consider how the lens may be best used to answer our purpose.

I do not propose to deal with matters concerning the principles and construction of lenses, but, assuming that the reader knows the simple elements concerning the use of a lens, I will endeavour to show which attributes of ordinary lenses are useful to us, and which are not.

By persons with only the slightest knowledge of photography, and basing their conclusions upon comparatively poor examples of craftsmanship, the photographic lens has been accused of falsifying perspective, by which is meant linear perspective.

That such alleged error is due chiefly to the ignorance of those who use the lens rather than to the lens itself should not I think be difficult to show. If photographers grasped the simple principles of linear and aerial perspective, and had their perceptions of things been trained to greater keenness, such errors had never been allowed to creep in except in special circumstances, when, under a sort of compromise, false perspective might be tolerated for the sake of other qualities from which it was inseparable.

With most of us, even without special training, there is a certain instinctive sense of proportion, and thus we recognise the relative distance of objects by their relative size.

All my readers are probably aware that there are wide-angle and narrow-angle lenses, so called on account of the extent of the field of view they respectively include on a plate of given size. Now it is because the short-focus or wide-angle lenses produce a result which violates our sense of the relative proportion of things that it has been condemned, and rightly so, for pictorial work.

If a wide-angle lens includes in the same size plate double the area of another of narrower angle, it follows that the wide-angle lens will include the same view as the narrower plus so much more above, below, and on either side. That part, then, which is identical will in the former have to be so much the smaller in order to make room for all this extra matter, and that additional matter which is nearer to the lens—as, for instance, the foreground—will necessarily be larger—but it is not exaggerated, it is only as the eye would see it if the eye could include so large a field; and by include I do not mean in the vague kind of way in which the eye is conscious of many things outside the proper range of its vision.

The inappropriate manner in which a wide-angle lens behaves in landscape work is commonly seen when photographing a scene in which a road or river comes down into the foreground at the base of the view, in which case, as many of my readers have perhaps experienced, the width of the road fills the entire base of the plate, and then, rapidly diminishing as it recedes, appears out of proportion and of exaggerated perspective.

In such a case, note the nearest point in the foreground which is included on the ground glass, and then, looking at it again without the camera, compare the width of the road at that point with the cottage or trees at a few hundred yards' distance, and you will find that the proportion is the same as shown by the wide-angle lens on the ground glass. The proportion of the width of the road in the foreground to the more distant objects depends upon how near a point you start from. One has only to bear in mind the fact that as receding lines converge towards a vanishing point or, what is the same thing, opposite approaching lines diverge, to see that if you include in your angle of view points, which approach yet nearer still, so their divergence continues.

Now, with a narrower angle lens less is included in the view, the foreground of the picture being formed by a point more remote, and, in the case of the roadway, at a point where the width of the road is relatively to the cottage much less; *yet the same size plate is filled.* This, indeed, is all the lens does do which the eye cannot—it, as it were, takes a little piece out of the centre of the wide-angle view, and magnifies it up to fill the same space as the whole.

The wide-angle lens cannot be said to exaggerate perspective as it really exists, if we take into consideration the angle of view included, and the fact that it thus places objects really in very different planes (and therefore greatly effected by linear perspective) in apparently the same plane; but the result violates our instinctive sense of proportion, because our eye includes a narrow angle, and the brain representing our focussing screen includes only that.

That this is so may be seen by photographing the same view with a wide-angle lens and with a narrower one, on, say, a half-plate, and then taking that part of the view which the narrow-angle lens includes from the view taken by the wide-angle lens and enlarging it up to half-plate size.

This is shown on the accompanying three illustrations, in which we have the same view taken with two different lenses, and then a *portion* of that made with the wide-angle enlarged to the size of the whole, which will now be found

to be the same as that taken by the long-focus or narrow-angle lens. If, then, photography seems sometimes to give

No 1.—Taken with a Wide-Angle Lens.

false perspective, it is because we are not using a lens the field of which agrees with that of our eye.

The recent cinematograph displays have afforded a ready means of showing us what a difference there is between, say,

the figure of a man at a hundred yards' distance and when close at hand. Notice in some of these animated photo-

No. 2.—Same View as No. 1, but taken with Narrow-Angle Lens.

graphs figures moving towards the audience—how, after having moved a short distance, they seem to so rapidly

increase in size, until they become gigantic as they come close to one. Having noted this on the projection screen, next apply the observation in the street, and you may be surprised to find how rapidly an approaching figure seems to increase in size as soon as it has advanced towards you

No. 3.—Marked Portion of Wide-Angle View Enlarged
(see p. 53)

a little way, until, when quite close, it is sufficient to blot out the whole world.

One thinks of a postage-stamp as of very small area as compared with, say, the doorway in one's room, and yet, holding the stamp in front of my eye, it shall eclipse one

door panel, or two, or the entire door, according to the distance at which I hold it.

The apparently exaggerated perspective of a wide-angle lens, and the apparent false proportion between foreground and distance, is the result of the lens including an abnormal amount of the view—it sees at one time, and includes on one plate, what the human eye cannot. In order to include the foreground close to one's feet, the wide view left and right, and the distance which such a lens includes, it is necessary to move the head, to swing the human lens up and down, right and left, in a manner equivalent to making a series of views; and yet the camera lens includes the whole series on one plate.

A lens, then, of longer focus, and therefore narrower angle, gives an image more nearly coinciding with the view which, without effort, the human eye ordinarily includes. Now in pictorial work what we require is not so much a lens which will give a mathematically correct representation as one that is true to the mental impression which things give us.

It is a common remark that in a photograph, distant objects, such as mountains or ships at sea, seem so dwarfed. If, however, you take a view-meter frame as was described in an earlier section, and setting this up so as to include with its frame exactly the same extent of the view as is given by your lens on the focussing screen, and then compare the relative size of objects in foreground and in distance each to each and also to the total area of the frame-enclosed space, you will probably find that, compared with the size of the whole view, the lens' rendering of distant objects is correct after all.

How is it, then, that we do somehow feel that, in the photograph, the lofty mountains at a little distance off seem to dwindle down to the size of mole-hills?

Consider for a moment what takes place as you watch the ship which is sailing past at perhaps half a mile's distance. The ship, and little else, fills the whole of your mental plate. With your eyes fixed on that ship and your attention engrossed by it, it may astonish you when you realise how very little else of the scene is clearly within your range of vision. Our eyes shift to right or left so almost

unconsciously and upon the very slightest impulse. As we look at the ship and think about it, our mental focussing screen, so to speak, includes practically nothing else, and our mental attitude therefore for the moment is that of a lens of enormous focal length, so great that the angle of view is narrowed down to include only that one small object which for the time fills the whole plate. Similarly with a group of lofty mountains, though perhaps some miles distant, as we look at them and think about them we are unconscious for the time of anything else in the landscape until we shift our eyes, be it ever so little, and also shift our attention. Then we are doing by a series of actions what the lens does in one.

The actual angle of view included by the eye has little to do with it. We have rather to consider the angle included by the mind, if we may so describe it. Our imagination enlarges the particular object which absorbs our attention, so that one might suppose that the best way to get a photographic representation which would agree with our mental impression would be to make our negative in the usual way and subsequently enlarge just one particular small portion. This might answer well enough up to a certain extent, but that say in a group of mountains the imagination enlarges one part or one feature more than another. We know the mountain peaks are lofty, and we think of them so, and we mentally enlarge them, but not the cottage at their foot, or the trees half way up.

Thus, for instance, we look at Snowdon from the east and see its three symmetrically arranged peaks, one of which we recognise as being loftier than its fellows—but photograph it, or measure it, and we shall find how very inconsiderable is its greater apparent altitude; and yet our mental impression is that of one peak distinctly higher than the others, and if we drew a representation of the group from memory we should probably at once betray this imaginative aspect.

Take one more example. What is our *idea* of the rising moon? Recall the painter's rendering of it. Is it not that of a great disc rising from behind the far-off horizon? But, holding your pencil at a little distance from your eye, measure, as it were, the diameter of the moon as its large

round image just clears the lowest film of mist and the diminutive hedgerows and trees in the distance, and then compare the actual diameter with the nearer objects—trees, houses, figures. Next look at the same scene on your ground glass and see how the lens gives it. If you are in doubt, as you probably will be, in finding how small the moon really is, then by way of corroboration hold between finger and thumb at a little distance from the eye the smallest coin of the realm, and you will find it will quite eclipse the great round face of the moon, whilst had you a moment before attempted to sketch this scene you might have felt inclined to lay a half-crown piece on your paper to draw a circle to indicate the moon, so much larger is the mental impression of anything with which the mind particularly occupies itself.

Sooner or later, then, you will probably conclude that no lens will give us things as our fancy depicts them; and whilst this inability to alter relative proportions as we might sometimes wish to do is a source of regret, we may take comfort in the fact that the unflinching truthfulness of the lens gives us accuracy when we do want it, but which, were we entirely self-dependent, we might not be skilful enough to produce. Here, then, is a compromise with which we must rest content.

As a rule, in pictorial photography a long-focus lens will on the whole be most satisfactory. One might almost say the longer focus the better, but that probably the length of our camera-bellows will of itself set a limit. Moreover, it will sometimes happen that with a very narrow angle we may be unable to include some parts which seem to be required to form a pleasing and well-balanced composition, as also it will prevent our including tree-tops and tall objects which we may desire. Here again, then, is a compromise.

I might suggest that a lens of 18 inches focal length is a very useful instrument with a $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5$ plate; and I have used with considerable satisfaction a lens of 25 inches on a 12×10 plate, 30 inches on a 15×12. I do not think in a general way we need have our cameras especially constructed to admit of greater focal lengths than these, and not many cameras will be found to much exceed such extension as these figures indicate.

The usual Rapid Rectilinear lens, although invaluable if our photography is going to cover all kinds of work, will, if used for pictorial purposes only, probably be of too short a focus; but then it can be used with one combination only, when great speed is not required, and its capacity as a doublet with both combinations can always be held in reserve for special cases. Were I to choose I should prefer a Single Landscape lens, intended to cover a plate at least one size larger than that with which I proposed to use it.

The chief objection that can be raised to single lenses is that vertical lines are distorted or bent in consequence of the non-correction of the lens. It may be said, however, that in landscape and most out-of-door subjects in which no very pronounced vertical lines occur near to the edge of the plate, this defect will rarely trouble us, and if the lens be stopped down the distortion is practically cured. Such lenses are, moreover, inexpensive, which may be a further recommendation.

I do not think it is possible to give more definite advice than that, so much must depend on individual circumstances; and, as we shall see presently, angle of view and size of image are not the only points to be considered with respect to the lens.

Pin-hole as a Substitute for the Lens.

As my reader is probably aware, some prominent pictorial workers recommend the abolition of the lens entirely and the use instead of a minute apperture descriptively termed a pin-hole.

It is not my purpose to here describe the making or the use of the pin-hole: for such instruction I must refer my readers to the writings of others.

As regards the relative size of the objects it includes there is no difference between a lens and a pin-hole; the objections to one apply equally to the other. As with a pin-hole there is no glass lens to defract the rays, and also no point of focus, the plate can be set at any distance from the aperture without either loss or gain in definition, the difference being merely with angle of view included. This is seen to be the case if one looks through a small hole in a

card: the nearer the hole to the eye the wider one's view—that is, the shorter the focal length the wider the angle. This is without limit, so that, did one's camera admit of it, the "pin-hole" might be racked out from the plate until comparatively small objects in the centre of the view filled the whole area of the plate.

The chief characteristic of the pin-hole photograph is that we get a general suppression of focus in all parts—the picture is nowhere quite sharp. If a sufficiently small aperture be employed, we can get a degree of sharpness

Taken with a Pin-hole, by J. Chamberlain.

to delineate all objects with a recognisable degree of accuracy, and without so much blurring as to create confusion or make the blurring obtrusive.

It is often difficult and well-nigh impossible, when using the lens, to get all planes in moderate focus without getting one or some part excessively so, and similarly, if we avoid excessive sharpness in each and every part, some planes, such as the extreme distance or immediate foreground, so broken up as to destroy form and structure. Then it is that the pin-hole, with its equal focus in all planes and at any focal length, seems to recommend itself; but if it be

desired to emphasize any object, by introducing more detail there than elsewhere, then the uniform sharpness of the pin-hole image fails us.

But the quality of the result obtained by using a pin-hole to which its advocates attach most importance is the suppression of sharp focus over the whole image, no one plane being more sharply focussed than another. This brings us to the consideration of

Focus, or Definition, and the Value of Detail in Pictorial Photography.

It is hardly possible that the student shall not already be well aware of the continual discussion which is maintained between those who require that a photograph shall be in sharp focus all over, those who require that some considerable portion of the picture shall be sharp, but consent to other portions, as for instance the distance, being out of focus, and those who attach little importance to sharp definition for its own sake, and in many cases prefer that everything shall be *not* sharp. My duty here is to rather set the matter before my readers from an independent standpoint, and, assuming to begin with that we are dealing purely with the pictorial side of photography, endeavour to show the part which detail and definition play in such work.

Much that has already been said under the heading of Selection, and again under Tone and Atmosphere, must be now borne in mind as applying here—especially this, that in pictorial photography, as indeed in any picture, by whatsoever means, the pleasure it gives is not, or should not be, merely the pleasure of seeing, nor the interest excited by the recognition of familiar or curious objects.

In art the imagination and æsthetic sense of the beholder is appealed to by the representation of certain facts, and those facts or objects are represented in such a way and according to such design or arrangement as the artist considers best calculated to produce upon the imagination and senses a certain pre-determined effect; and whether photography is art or not matters not in pictorial photography; we are at least bent upon making

it as near to an art as we can—that is, we desire to make it artistic—and hence we must seek to practise it on similar lines to those phases of admitted art which seem most accessible.

From what has been said of the wide-angle lens it might be concluded that, apart from the question of its *apparent* exaggeration of perspective, it is a more perfect instrument than another because it includes more, but that, as has been suggested, we do not always want to include so much. If, then, one lens portrays a view with a greater amount of detail, it might be similarly concluded that it was therefore a superior instrument, and so it would be if a maximum amount of detail were required. The question then comes, Do we in pictorial work require a maximum amount of definition in our representations of nature, or, to put it in another way, will our representations of concrete things convey the abstract ideas that we desire them to, better in proportion to the amount of detail depicted?

I think I may leave the reader to answer this question for himself after following me to the end of this section.

In trying to decide this matter, we must first get rid of the idea that a picture depends for success upon its being an exact copy of nature as we see it. I have already devoted a good deal of space to the suggestion that it is truthfulness to the general impression which a scene makes, rather than to the physical facts, that the artist strives after.

Many writers on the subject of Focus and Definition have based their arguments upon what the eye sees when looking at a scene, and thus each has found evidence in favour of the particular method of practice which he advocates, whether it be sharp all over, sharp only in certain planes, or sharp nowhere. But it seems to me that as long as we attempt to reconcile the appearance of our pictures with what the eye sees we shall be constantly in confusion.

Now, although it may appear at first glance rather far-fetched, I would suggest as a basis for work that we endeavour to focus so as to as nearly as possible reproduce the mental picture instead of the visual one. I have tried

to show that in the imagined size of mountains, moon, etc., it is a mental picture not borne out by fact; and whilst we are limited in our freedom of action by the non-selective character of our instruments, yet if it be felt that in our general mental impression of a scene there is less detail than might actually have been there, in this we at least can control our too-mechanical means.

It may also be remembered that the amount of detail introduced into a picture does not depend wholly upon our lens, but upon the selection of our subject and the conditions of light and atmosphere under which we feel impelled to depict it.

Let us see how this thought helps us. As has already been explained, nature is most pictorially suitable when it is most impressive, as for instance at evening, at dawn, under various climatic conditions which partake more or less of a dramatic or emotional character.

I can hardly suppose that any one will contest the statement that nature appeals more to our feelings in the quieter light of evening or twilight than it does usually beneath the searching rays of the full noonday sun; and if we consider for a moment we may recollect that at these times the mere position of the light, combined with the atmosphere, destroys a great deal of detail which in the penetrating light of noon is plainly visible.

Generally speaking, the maximum amount of detail and clearest, sharpest delineation is visible at noon, partly because of the brighter light, partly because the light is high up, and also on account of the air being drier and atmosphere less apparent. And yet probably we can all remember very beautiful pictures of eventide which have made us feel very fully the quietude, peacefulness, the repose of evening, and upon reflection we should not have felt this any more had it been possible for the low evening light to have revealed more detail. From which I think we may at least conclude that abundant detail is not an essential to a picture which stirs our sympathies and feelings.

Next let us see what happens when detail is present.

Take up a good average specimen of the kind of photographs one may purchase at the popular visiting places, in

which every object is sharply defined and every detail, every line, is clear and distinct. Are you not involuntarily compelled to a certain amount of interest or curiosity in the view as it is there laid out? If the place is familiar to you, are you not at once interested in recognising each particular? What are your feelings as you look at it? Are they not recognitions and recollections? Does the photograph create any new sensations outside and apart from those which depend on the fact of the existence of the particular spot? If you do not recognise the place, is not your interest very feeble until you have ascertained the name and locality? And with this information vouchsafed —what then? Are you then inspired with much else than a desire to go and see the place? Or you draw comparisons between it and some others; or your curiosity is excited on account of something you know respecting it, its history, its buildings, its situation, or what not; and then you lay it aside. The conclusion is, then, that the presence of detail does not of itself constitute what we understand as a picture, and, as in the previous case given, a picture may be satisfactory even with detail lacking.

Suppose the same print were shown you, printed in such a way as to have all the detail simply obliterated, what would be the impression? In all probability you would be quite indifferent to it? You might express surprise as to what it was meant for; it is just probable that oyur own imagination would, as it were, dream something out of it; but in the main I think the conclusion we might draw is that the mere absence of detail does not necessarily constitute pictorial excellence.

Because, then, we may have seen some very successful pictures produced, in which detail was suppressed, we are *not to suppose that by merely putting a subject out of focus we shall therefore achieve pictorial success.* This has been a common error, and I would especially emphasize this, that if our intention be to produce a pictorial rendering of any scene, then, in focus or out of focus, "sharp" or "fuzzy" are not to be regarded as parts of a process, methods of procedure, to be employed as one employs ingredients in the Developer to attain definite results.

In a very great number of cases, the very subjects and

conditions which lend themselves best to the picturesque are those in which little detail, at least in some parts, is visible, and the sentiment of the thing, if there be any, often rests in those very regions lacking detail. Obviously there is but one way of reproducing such—as, for instance, in the accompanying illustration.

I have endeavoured now to formulate three cases and I will reiterate the conclusions in order to, as it were, clear the ground.

First—A scene in nature may be very pleasing to the senses and a picture of such a scene quite satisfactory when a large amount of detail is wanting.

Second—The mere *presence* of detail may afford interest, but does not of itself ensure pictorial success.

"SEA-MISTS."

Third—The mere *obliteration* of detail does not of itself ensure pictorial success.

It would seem now that there is but one other aspect to deal with, and that is to see if the presence of detail is or is not directly *advantageous* to pictorial effect.

We have already instanced a case in which the representation of much detail would be impossible, because, from the nature of the light, there was little detail visible, and had it been possible by any means to fill all the planes with detail, it would not have been accurate to nature, even as a facsimile record; but what we have now to consider is, when detail *is* visible in the scene upon careful inspection, whether it will not be a pictorial gain to suppress it.

I think perhaps the best way of arriving at a conclusion will be for the student to make or, better still, to procure

an ordinary photographic view of a pretty scene which is in sharp focus throughout. It is useless for me to give a reproduction here, because the very process of reproduction would destroy or break up the finer detail. Refer now to such a photograph, and if made on a highly polished surface paper so much the better for the purpose.

In such a photograph is it not a fact that the two mental impressions most powerfully excited are first one of equally distributed interest and secondly one of wonder, and perhaps admiration, at the marvellously clear delineation of all the minor facts? In neither case is there any exterior idea promoted, and no appeal to imagination.*

The fact that sharp definition in many parts of the picture attracts attention and interest to those several parts is at once a violation of the expediency, or indeed necessity, of having *one* object or region of prime importance which was dealt with, with regard to Composition; hence it would lead us to conclude that sharpest definition should be in one spot or plane only wherein is that principal object to which we wish to give supremacy. But the presence of very sharp definition in *any* part, and *more especially if all over*, seems to immediately excite wonder at a reproduction more perfect and complete than any unaided hand could make it, and then to excite admiration for the deft craftsmanship and the fine process which makes such rendering possible.

On these grounds alone, then, I should contend that by the astonishingly clear rendering of detail in a general subject we jeopardise the chance of our picture producing an effect upon the imagination.

In pictorial representation, therefore, it will be found, in most cases, best to suppress the maximum amount of sharpness in *all* parts to such an extent that this, the distinctive characteristic of the process, shall not be unduly obtrusive; but it *may* be *advisable* to obtain a greater degree of definition in one part of the picture than in others, in

* I will ask the reader to read this paragraph twice over and give it and the three or four paragraphs following really serious thought. Read intelligently and not taken only literally I feel they embody the whole argument as to suppression of focus as I, after some years of sincere study, have come to understand it.

order to assist in attracting attention to a certain central object or objects upon which the design or composition depends.

With regard to both these propositions no absolute rule can be laid down as to how much or how little detail should be included, or where the maximum amount (if it be decided to give greater detail in one part than another) should rest. It is entirely a matter to be determined by *the effect it is desired to give* and how the individual considers the effect is best secured. Herein it is seen that in subjugating the photographic means to our pictorial aims, more artistic judgment, or at least more individual taste, is required, than in the ordinary practice of photography, in which results, in accordance with prescribed standards, are obtained by absolute methods and rules.

The differentiation of focus therefore—that is, introducing more detail in one plane than another—as also the total suppression of focus in all planes, are only expedients and are merely courses of action towards an end, and must be resorted to only so far as the individual may think best serves his end.

The means by which maximum definition is obtained is usually by the insertion of a stop or diaphragm; and this introduces another consideration which has an important bearing on the case. If you focus your scene with a medium-sized stop, and then remove it, you will notice that the total illumination increases greatly, but the local intensity or brilliancy of high lights decreases, so that the tendency of a small stop is not only to make near and more distant objects equally defined, but also to bring distance and foreground into equal brightness, thus destroying tone and eliminating the effect of atmosphere.

In this is a stronger case against the use of small stops than the question of detail only.

I am well aware of the great difficulty which the beginner may experience in deliberately placing a view out of focus. I know very well the charm and fascination which the sharply focussed scene on the ground glass possesses; and then, with this glamour overcome, just how much to put it out of focus presents another formidable problem. The very fact that no rule can be given, because every separate

case must be a rule to itself, makes the difficulty the greater. But a word of advice may be here offered, of a negative rather than a direct kind.

I have suggested that sharp all over will in most cases mean uniform interest, and the awakening of curiosity and wonder at the way in which it is produced. If, then, we put things so far out of focus as to at once strike the beholder that it *is* out of focus, then, again, the very unusualness attracts notice to the *way in which it is done*, and the aim of the picture is as much defeated as when all parts were astonishingly sharp.

That print, when finished, will be most successful, which, being successful in conveying the intended idea, does not, until deliberately examined for the purpose, strike the observer one way or the other as regards its sharpness or method of production, so that one might almost formulate the maxim that in proportion to the powerfulness of the effect produced, the conventionality in its method of production *may*, if desired, be departed from, because the effectiveness and imaginative qualities blind one more completely, so to speak, to how it is obtained.

If focus is so far departed from as to form blots, irregular forms, and destroy the general structure of familiar objects, then at once the eye is arrested by the eccentricity and grotesqueness of the whole, and the idea intended to be conveyed is in danger of being missed; so that between this extreme, and the other of all-over sharpness, we have to decide on our course of action in each separate case.

The destruction of tonality and atmosphere by the use of small stops has already been referred to, and hence if open aperture, or say F8 or F11, will not give us the desired amount of definition, it may be best to resort to the swing back of the camera before stopping down the lens, as by that means the softening effect of the large aperture is retained.

Speaking from my own experience, the pictorial advantages of using very large apertures was brought home to me more by accident than intention, for I found that late evening pictures in which, owing to the deficiency of light, large stops or even open aperture of the lens had been compulsory, invariably gave a better rendering of atmo-

sphere and therefore distance, truer relative tones and therefore better perspective, and a roundness or modelling, not present in those pictures made with smaller stops.

From the narrowness of angle, length of focus, and less crispness of definition usually obtained with lenses known as Single Landscape Lenses, I am led to recommend objectives of this class for Pictorial work, the back combination of a doublet being similar in nature.

A few words must here be said about dispensing with a lens altogether and using instead a minute aperture already referred to as a Pin-hole.

It is I think possible to conceive some open landscape subjects in which the composition and the distribution of light and shade are in themselves sufficiently expressive to render unnecessary the local concentration of attention, and in such cases the pin-hole is a valuable auxiliary to our means. Moreover, the unrestricted angle of vision, that is the total liberty as to focal length or distance between pin-hole and plate, also gives desirable freedom, and the disadvantage of the long exposure necessary is perhaps compensated for by the manner in which the pin-hole renders such moving objects as rippling water or wind-blown trees and grasses.

We, may, then, regard pin-hole methods not as the salvation of Pictorial Photography, as some would have us think, not a method to be adopted in all cases, nor yet as giving a picture wholly inartistic because without power of differentiation of focus, as others have argued, but as an occasional means to be resorted to when our judgment and the special circumstances may determine.

I have now devoted more space to the subject of detail or sharp focus than I should have thought necessary were it not for the erroneous ideas which appear to exist. Possibly in revolting from the too-vigorous insistence upon universally sharp focus of the earlier photographers, the artistically inclined have been deceived, by the apparent advantage of suppression of detail, into imagining that the future success in pictorial photography lay entirely in such methods, and have hence attached an exaggerated importance to out-of-focus methods. It cannot, however, be too clearly had in mind that the mere obliteration of sharply

defined detail will not of itself, and in the absence of other qualities, ensure pictorial success.

On the other hand, there are many people to whom a photograph, be it ever so beautiful and full of feeling as a picture, is displeasing if it is not full of well-defined details, and they complain that they want to see things clearly, and resent anything approaching indistinctness; it is equally possible that a pictorial representation is something which never will appeal to them. Many men are so constituted that everything they see, every person they meet, is immedintely and instinctively submitted to a sort of analysis and critical examination, and hence the absence of minute particulars conveys a sense of disappointment. I do not think the opinion of such critics in artistic matters should be considered, their standard of excellence being directly opposed to the artistic or pictorial standard.

Printing Methods and their Bearing on Pictorial Photography.

It has already been explained that it is reversing the natural order of things to speak of the print before the plate and development, but in the particular application of photography that we are considering, it is I think necesary. Herein we have an example of the wide difference which exists between photography as we are regarding it, and as usually practised for topographical and other useful purposes. In the latter uniformity is aimed at, in order to secure which precise rules and formulæ are given and must be followed; but in pictorial work every variety may be required, and therefore every variety of negative needed, and the processes must accordingly be modified to meet the required end. It will therefore be best to be clear as to the character of print we need, and then the description of negative most calculated to give us such print, and then consider what modifications in development, etc., may be advisable. In other words, we must understand what it is we want to get before we decide upon how to get it.

It might be expected that in this chapter I should give the student some advice as to the most suitable printing papers for pictorial work; but I shall do best perhaps by

simply and briefly pointing to some of the excellencies and defects in various familiar printing processes.

If our photography is to be merely a method of faultless copying, then it were just as well if the whole process, from the exposure of the plate to the final completion of the printing, were entirely automatic, requiring no guidance whatever, and so eliminating the possible clumsiness or carelessness due to interference. For such purpose a process that could be carried out and worked according to rule of thumb would be all that could be desired; and in such case the fact that the progress of the print could not be watched, as for instance in Carbon or Bromide work, would be no disadvantage.

But in pictorial work the necessity of watching every little step in the progress of the picture, so as to modify or alter here and there in accordance as we think our idea is being carried out, makes it of great importance that the printing of the picture should be visible; and therefore in this particular we should regard the silver printing papers, such as albumen and gelatine or plain-salted papers, which, as the reader knows, are what are termed "print-out" papers, as the ideal. But as more than compensating this advantage there are to be considered the shiny, highly polished surfaces of the first two and the question of whether the silver-printed image does or does not give a correct rendering of the relative tones secured in the negative.

The reader is probably aware that a certain quality of negative is better suited to one kind of paper than another —that is to say that from a given standard quality of negative different printing papers give respectively prints varying in density, contrast, and brilliancy. It is obvious, then, that all cannot be equally true and all do not equally well yield the precise quality of print most suited to convey the intended impression. The objection to the shiny, highly polished surface of albumen and gelatine papers is that, besides the fact that the surface reflects false and disturbing lights, the very polish and gloss has an artificial appearance which, from its very superfine character, irresistibly reminds us of its origin and nature. It attracts too much attention to the means, to the handicraft, to admit of the idea and feeling which the representation might kindle.

Admirable as the translucence of the albumen or the gelatine film is for revealing detail and giving an almost startling clearness to a view, these very characteristics seem also to miss the rendering of atmosphere, and that slight softening of outline which gives exquisite indecision and suggestiveness to objects in nature; and hence, notwithstanding the advantage which exists in being able to see the printed image gradually growing under one's hands, it is more than outweighed by the other characteristics referred to.

As regards the rendering of relative tones, the transparency of its deeper shadows, and the variety of colours, as well as the freedom from excessive gloss, carbon printing must stand well in the favour of the pictorial worker, but that comparatively little can be done to guide or control the formation of the printed image, being as it is invisible until after development. Moreover, unless considerable skill be exercised, in landscape work at least, there is a liability to heaviness unsuitable for lighter and more delicate effects.

We are then brought to consider Platinotype, which, on the whole, may be regarded as the most suitable for general pictorial work. Its power of rendering relative tones and atmosphere is perhaps unequalled, whilst, although every one who has used it has sometimes wished that the undeveloped image were more visible, yet the pale, ghost-like print made by the light is very much better than nothing at all, and, indeed, may often be quite sufficient to guide us in our endeavours to control the action of light in a manner to be shortly described.

The platinotype process of printing, moreover, gives us a considerable variety of surfaces, from smooth ordinary paper, to very rough, and a sufficiently wide range of colour to answer most purposes.

That the process is not so difficult to work as many seem to imagine I have endeavoured to show in a little book devoted to the process which I published last year * in which I gave full instructions for working it.

Bromide paper appears likely to become more popular

* *Platinotype Printing:* Hazell, Watson, & Viney, Ltd., 1*s*.

for purely pictorial work, since the more recent exhibited results have shown that a certain flatness and poorness, varied by an excessive harshness of tone, too long regarded as inseparable characteristics, are not essential qualities.

I cannot close these brief references to printing processes without naming the recently revived method known as the Gum process; but until much more has been done, and its powers have stood a longer test, I am not disposed to assign to it any definite place amongst other printing means, nor to forecast its success. Certainly it does seem that the large amount of control which it is possible for the operator to exercise over the printed image should make it an especially valuable instrument in the hands of the artist who, in order to convey some impression, desires to produce an image which may be largely imaginative, with, as it were, a comparatively small photographically formed foundation or just as much of the light-produced picture as he think fit to preserve. Inferior as a mechanical printing method for ordinary photographic purposes, the gum process may for a time at least be regarded as standing apart for pictorial purposes, because the large amount of personal control which must be exercised before it can be said to show distinct advantages over other methods implies that the controlling hand must be guided by an artist—that is, a man of such large instinctive artistic taste that one can hardly conceive that he would be able to produce a better result by painting, and without the use of photography at all, were he to devote the same skill and endeavour to the employment of brush or pencil, instead of photographic appliances.

We will now consider the manner in which control over the formation of our print may be exercised.

Printing the Picture and Controlling its Formation for Pictorial Effect.

So long as our photographic printing is allowed to be in a measure automatic—that is to say, so long as the print is the mere effect of light acting on a sensitive surface through a negative, the result being determined only by natural laws—the man quite without artistic feeling or

First Uncontrolled Print for Picture entitled

"TIDE BEREFT."

"TIDE BEREFT" (Finished Print).

training has an equal chance of success with him who may possess such feeling and training to a high degree.

The wonderful measure of truthfulness with which the automatically produced image reproduces a beautiful scene in nature is in its way so valuable that, bearing in mind that probably the majority of photographers have not had the opportunity of cultivating perceptions or training themselves, by the study of art or even of nature, it will probably be best for most of my readers, for a time at least, to content themselves with endeavouring to secure good Composition in their subjects, and selecting pleasing and effective lighting, and with producing negatives in which atmosphere is rendered and distance suggested by the due subordination of detail, and then to print without any idea of improving upon the direct and uninterrupted result which such a negative will yield.

If after a while the picture-maker feels that in his print this or that portion would be better if lighter or darker, and after thoughtful consideration he feels sure that, from observation of nature and the cultivation of taste, he knows how much darker or lighter such parts should be, if he had the power to control their formation, then it may be worth while to ascertain whether or not he can exert a power of control to the attainment of such end.

Probably every photographer has at times found it convenient to print one part of a negative more than another or has covered another portion during printing, thus deliberately making those portions lighter or darker, as the case may be. The cultivation of this very elementary power is what I would recommend to every one who is conscious that the ordinarily produced photographic image is not all that he would wish it to be; and he will not have gone far before he will probably be surprised at the enormous difference which he can produce in his print, merely by interrupting, and subsequently permitting, the action of the light either over large regions of the negative or locally in small parts.

In the illustration on page 74 we have an inlet of a Suffolk river which has been left almost without water by the receded tide, the wet mud and sand photographing very light, as it reflects the sky on its smooth surface. The

resulting print, if left to itself, gave the whole of the bed of the creek one bright light mass, in contrast to which the dark banks and brown, weather-stained grass of the marshland on either side and beyond appeared unpleasantly dark. In the print which is here reproduced, however, the following course was pursued.

Along the middle of the muddy bed an irregularly torn piece of paper was laid on the negative, whilst a piece of tissue paper was cut to answer the shape of the grass land beyond, and this also was laid on the negative. The print is in platinotype.

The negative with the platinotype paper was then subjected to light in the ordinary way until the little cluster of trees and the house in the distance was considered to be printed deeply enough, but before then the tissue paper which was keeping back the printing of the grass was removed, its influence having been exerted to a sufficient extent. The upper portion of the picture was then covered, whilst the lower part was allowed to print more deeply; and when it was deemed that this, too, had progressed far enough, the whole was taken out of the printing frame and the negative put on one side.

The printing frame having a stout piece of clear clean glass in the front, the print was returned to the printing frame with its face towards the plain glass. The upper portion of the picture being now covered with brown paper or other opaque material, the lower portion was exposed to light, but with the piece of paper which had been occupying the centre of the river bed reinstated—the result of this being that, in addition to the deeper printing which this lower portion had already received, the light now tinted it all down still further, except where the piece of irregular paper in the centre was interrupting the light. During the whole operation the tissue and other paper interruptions or masks were moved *slightly* from time to time, so as to prevent any harsh outlines and edges from printing.

Now refer to the finished print as reproduced on page 75.

A patch of bright light has been secured in the hollow of the muddy creek, which answers to the bright light in the cloud above it. This light has been produced by holding back printing in that particular spot, and has been emphasized

by tinting down the rest of the foreground. Again, the relative tone of the level grass beyond *appeared* to be too deep when printed from first, so it was made to print lighter by interposing tissue paper for a short time. The printing of the distance was stopped at the moment when it was judged to be dark enough; and thus the whole has been produced by purely photographic means held under control by the printer. A comparison of this with the companion illustration made from an uncontrolled print will perhaps make this more clear.

It may be said perhaps that if the whole of the tide-bereft creek came light in nature, as shown in the uncontrolled print, why should any attempt be made to alter it, thus making it untruthful to nature?

It may be that the artist considered he could produce a more effective rendering of the scene, or one which would appeal to the feelings of the beholder more powerfully; but as a matter of fact, in the present instance the landscape was taken when there was a perfectly clear, cloudless sky, and the introduction of the clouds which it will be seen have been used, made it desirable to produce in the light-reflecting mud an effect which would emphasize the idea of a gleam of light piercing the heavy evening clouds and glinting here and there on the rill of water and wet sand or mud.

It will now be seen that the picture as produced is a very widely different thing to what the photographer witnessed. He has practically created a new thing out of materials gathered from nature; upon a foundation of fact he has allowed his imagination to build up an entirely fictitious scene, and the truth of the effect will depend upon how far his perceptions have been trained by studying nature at various times, so as to know how things might look under certain circumstances. In such a picture the artist may depart from actual fact, from what *actually was*, so long as he does not exceed what *might have been*.

But to know what might have been implies a considerable knowledge of nature, a knowledge only to be gained by a long course of study, and so I would say most emphatically that if the photographer has not studied nature and does not possess the requisite knowledge, he had far better be

content to let the self-produced photographic image alone, lest his modifications and alterations result in a greater absence of truth to fact than the uncontrolled print possesses absence of effectiveness.*

Of course there are many instances in which but little modification is required, the scene as seen in nature being sufficiently satisfactory. So much the better; for let it be remembered that as photography is our chosen medium, then if photography unaided will give us the effect we want there is no especial virtue in altering it.

There are modifications, such as a little shading down here and there, mere trifling matters which may be more safely attempted.

It is my place only to point out what *can* be done and presently to suggest *how* it may be done. *When*, and to *what extent*, must be determined by each and every individual in each and every instance. There is certainly no possibility of a rule being laid down.

I will give one more example, and rather an extreme one. Here are a series of four illustrations, and the story of them is as follows.

One of the wide marsh lands of Suffolk; a group of trees just budding into earliest spring foliage; brown, withered grass underfoot, sprinkled with the new springing blades of green; a clear grey-blue sky on the afternoon of an April day, which lighted up the narrow stream of water coming down to my feet. The simplicity of the Composition pleased me. It was very bright, very full of glowing afternoon light—the rather quaint, straggling trees possessed something of poetry about them; and so two plates were exposed, one with what I judged to be about correct time, the other with about three times the exposure.

Then a long tramp home by the river wall and across some miles of the same barren country, wondering the while what I would do with my tree picture.

It was a day or two after that I experienced in the same neighbourhood a very rough afternoon. Gusts of wind, pitiless rain, interspersed with brilliant intervals when the

* This I feel to be sound advice, and I ask that it be taken to heart by all such as doubt the justice or advisability of "improving" nature.

"SUNSHINE AND RAIN" (Preliminary Print).

Cloud for "SUNSHINE AND RAIN."

sun's rays pierced the clouds, glancing here and there in fitful patches of light, and anon bathing all the distance in haze as the rain-soaked earth exhaled its moisture in the moments of warmth. The effect out on the dreary marsh land was very grand. It was one of nature's most appealing moods as the weird, weather-beaten trees bent and writhed under the squall, and then glistened and seemed to laugh again as the drift of sunshine passed.

I thought about it a good deal. I developed those negatives of trees taken under such different climatic conditions,

"SUNSHINE AND RAIN" (Combined Print).
(*For finished picture see next page.*)

half hoping that by some miracle the recollection of the day of rain, storm, and sunshine might appear—so with the second negative I kept the whole very thin, restraining density in the high lights, thinking that perhaps I might do something with it of which I had as yet only a half-formed plan.

It was a month or so later that I photographed some clouds in another district, when the dark bank of shadow was riven here and there by shafts of light from the sun

"SUNSHINE AND RAIN."

behind; and afterwards I bethought me to wed one of these to my trees—it suited fairly well; but then came back the old memory of the sunshine and rain, and with it the desire to express by means of these two negatives some of my impression.

It merely meant shading one part, stopping back another, accentuating the shafts of descending sunshine by strips of paper, restraining printing to get something of the idea of the luminous haze which veiled the distance, yet not so much as to prevent the effect of dark rain-clouds and shadows drifting close to earth in the right-hand distance. Keeping a good deal of the foreground dark, I was able to accentuate the light in the patch of water in the immediate front; and so on, dodging, controlling, making three or four prints in succession, until, after several trials, I had to be content with the one here reproduced, and which I called "Sunshine and Rain." A good deal has been lost in the reproduction, but I hope it may serve to suggest how very far the photographer is from being compelled to copy only that which is before him. By means of photography he may not, as the painter can, be able to introduce objects which were not present, but he *can* introduce effects which may express ideas more successfully than the same man could with brush or pencil, lacking as he may the especial aptitude for their use.

As in the second part of this little book I shall have other examples to refer to, I will leave the matter for the present.

A word now to those who ask, "How is this to be best done?"

In the first place, it is to my mind essential to have some means whereby, with the least possible trouble, the *whole* print can be viewed from time to time during printing; not only this, but, for my own part, I do not think it possible, especially with large prints, to rightly judge the position of lights and shades, and their depth, and to tell how the general design will come, unless one can set the print up at a little distance and look at it with deliberation.

With all but quite small sizes, then, I dispense with printing-frames entirely, and, I give here the particulars

of a method of printing which I first published in *The Amateur Photographer*, last November.

If I have succeeded in making this method clear, it will be seen that it is not necessary for the print to be only the same size as the landscape negative, but that if it be thought desirable several inches more sky can be easily added.

Now, as every one knows, to take the partly finished print altogether from the negative in the printing frame, and to attempt to return it, will rarely, if ever, be attended with success, unless some special means be adopted for securing the return of the print to *exactly* the same position, a matter not easy to arrange.

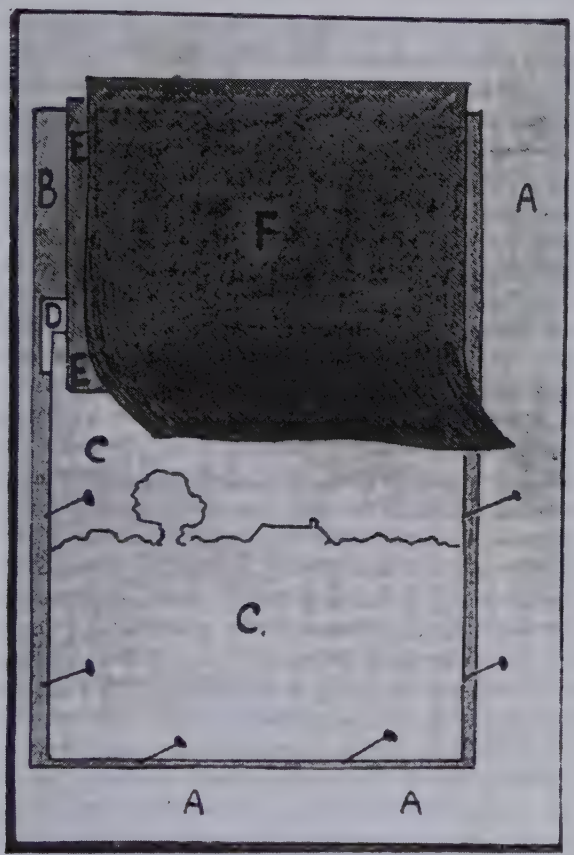
There is another matter in respect to which the ordinary printing frame with glass in front has proved unsuitable to my purpose, when placing anything—such as the pieces of paper referred to in the printing of "Tide Bereft," or cotton-wool, which I substitute sometimes—on some dark-printing portion, to make it print lighter. Doing this outside the glass front of the printing frame meant that I could not get close enough to know exactly how it would print, the printing paper being separated by the glass and the thickness of the negative; and it is essential, as already suggested, that at any time during the progress of printing we should be able to remove, reduce, or alter the material or mask used to intercept the light.

Another disadvantage in the ordinary printing frame is that in producing delicate gradations and introducing very subtle alterations, it will be necessary to examine the print very frequently during its progress—perhaps in bright weather, and at some stages, every half-minute—so as to get the precise depth of shade when tinting down, etc.; and the necessity of undoing the springs at the back so often, and peeping at the turned-back print half at a time, makes some simpler means desirable.

The following, then, is a substitute which I have found successful for anything above whole plate, and a little ingenuity on the part of the user should make it equally practicable for smaller sizes. Some such particulars as the following I published a few months ago in the pages of *The Amateur Photographer*, and I am glad to learn that

since then many well-known workers have adopted the same means with great satisfaction.

First, a good stout drawing board. On this I stretch a piece of felt or stout, soft cloth, or smooth variety of flannel, two or three sheets of good brown paper, the



PRINTING WITHOUT A PRINTING FRAME.

thicker the better, and a sheet of tissue paper. On the felt-covered board first lay the printing paper, which, as in my own case, is usually platinotype, C.C. or R.S. In the accompanying figure it is supposed that we propose to print from say a 15 × 12 landscape negative, a print

several inches more from top to bottom, so as to introdnce more sky. The landscape negative is then laid on the printing paper at one end, leaving a small margin of paper at the bottom and on either side. This requires that the paper be cut a little wider than the width of the negative to be used.

Refer to the figure, in which AA is the drawing board, covered as already described, B is the platinotype paper, and CC the landscape negative. On each of three sides of this negative two pins are stuck firmly into the paper, transfixing it and securing it to the board beneath. These pins must be placed vertical and so close to the negative that it cannot be moved from left to right. The negative is then pressed against the two pins at the base.

Should the negative be removed at any time, if it be replaced so as to press against all six pins, it must be in the same position as originally. *Under* the top edge of the glass negative a strip of tissue paper folded two or three times is placed. This will prevent the sharp edge of the negative from cutting or scratching the sensitive paper. This is marked D in the figure. Over the uncovered portion of the platinotype paper a sheet of stout opaque brown paper is laid, as at E E. This is to come rather lower down than the edge of the tissue paper D.

If the sky portion of the negative is opaque, and there is no danger of its printing through, the whole may now be put out to print. If, however, on the other hand, the sky is a trifle thin, another piece of brown paper, as F, is placed above all, and the lower edge bent up and roughly adjusted to suit the outline of the landscape. This last sheet, F, must be moved slightly from time to time, and if at any time light should accidentally creep under the bent-up edge, the paper, E, will stop its getting so far as to affect that portion of the platinotype paper which is ultimately intended to be used for the clouds.

When printing has proceeded a little while, it is my custom to take the board to the back of the room farthest from the light, or into a room lighted by gas, and, lifting the brown papers and negative quite off, set the drawing board with the print attached on an easel or other suitable support, examine it deliberately and from a little distance.

By this means, although, as in platinotype, the image may be only faint, one may get a better general idea of the relative depth of various portions, and can better foretell if on this side or that a light patch will prove offensive and should be toned down.

After the necessary consideration, the negative and brown paper can be replaced and further printing carried out if desired. The cover, F, may be exchanged for a larger sheet if it is deemed best, so as to cover portions of the negative already printed deep enough, and local printing can commence. The landscape portion being finished, the pins are drawn out and the cloud negative adjusted in position, E E being of course now made to cover the landscape portion and D to take the extreme edge of the cloud negative when it comes below the cloud horizon of the view; and F will be shaped and bent so as to shield the sky line of the already printed landscape.

The felt-covered board is cleared, and the platinotype paper attached thereto with drawing-pins at the four corners, and a stout sheet of brown paper laid over the whole. At any portion where a deeper shade is to be produced, the brown paper is to be cut, torn, or a hole made, and then with a cloth or cotton-wool, or even using one's hand as a shade, light is allowed to fall on such portions. Here taste, judgment, and a little practice are one's only guides; but the fact that one is working directly on the surface of the print, and not through glass, will make it easier.

Of course it will be desirable to return the board to the easel frequently—the more frequently the better, perhaps—so as to keep a close watch upon the progress of the print, and by keeping covered only those portions which are to be kept light, and exposing for longer or shorter those parts to be printed deeper, it should be apparent to any reader that practically any alteration may be effected, and any one may use the light almost as directly as though one were shading down with a pencil or stump.

With landscape negatives I often retouch with pencil or stump, or more rarely with a brush, but always on the glass side or back of the negative.

Then, with the arrangement above described, I not

infrequently remove the retouching when the printing has partly progressed, and put it on again or increase it, while the printing is actually going on, exactly as I find the result suggests is desirable.

It may be asked, "How about getting contact between negative and print?" In the case of large negatives the weight of the glass negative itself is enough, especially if the felt with which the board is covered is well and truly laid; but if one feels doubtful about this, a few drawing pins put round the edge of the negative will perhaps still further press the negative tightly down.

Practically anything which strikes one may be employed to stop the light—cotton-wool, soft-cloths, paper, or anything handy.

There is a difference in printing greater depth to any portion *with* the negative and shading down without the negative. In the former case we get a deeper and stronger image, still preserving to a great extent the relative contrasts between the lights and shades in that portion. This is not always what we require. In order to concentrate attention upon—that is, to emphasize, some particular spot, it may be desirable to shade down and *flatten* some portion. This is better done when the negative is finished with, and then, laying a sheet of clear glass upon the print, cover the whole with brown paper or an opaque black cloth, such as a black velvet focussing cloth. We can then see the image by raising the paper or cloth and determine what portion requires attention. Then raise the edge of the paper or crumple up the cloth, and, slightly moving it about with both hands, shade this or that portion in.

Both with the negative in position and subsequently without it, every part of a large print is, maybe, thus printed in, piece by piece, a large print often occupying me two or three days.

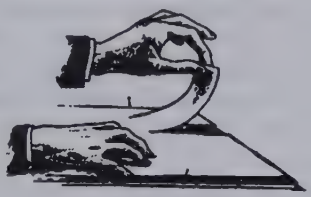
From time to time it is removed to a room where the light is subdued or where there is gas-light, and it is pinned to the wall and carefully considered, along with a roughly printed trial print. Two or three sketches are here given, showing how the paper or cloth is handled when any portions of the print are being "printed in."

No. 1 shows how an over-light corner of a foreground may

be tinted in by raising the corner of the brown paper cover; and this being raised and lowered frequently, ensures gradation.

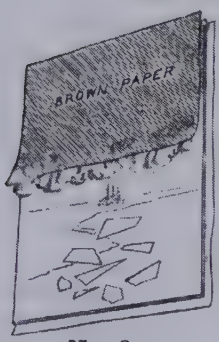
No. 1.

No. 2 shows how a streak of water across a landscape may be toned down, making it darker towards the edge of the print, where the paper is raised highest. This was done in the case of the water in the picture entitled "Feldee Shore," page 2.



No. 2.

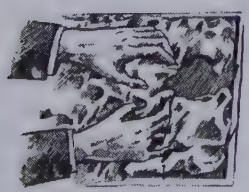
No. 3 shows how small, bright lights, as where water shines on small pools amongst the sand at low tide, may be emphazised. In this case the brown paper covers the sky and some *loose, thin* pieces of cotton-wool are used to stop the light from encroaching under the upturned edge of the brown paper.



No. 3.

No. 4 illustrates how a larger portion of the view may be shaded in, the hands manipulating a cloth which is occasionally shifted to avoid a hard outline.

No. 4.



No. 5.

No. 5 shows how a still smaller portion may be shaded in by the same means. Or the whole may be covered with a sheet of opaque paper in which a hole has been cut.

Once started, I doubt not that the ingenuity of each practitioner will suggest any amount of variety in the dodges that can be resorted to.

The greater ease in printing which this method gives

needs to be experienced before it can be realised. One feels at once that the print is under one's direction. Without removing the negative and paper from the light, but whilst printing is actually in progress, we may temporarily arrest the action of any part by applying a dab of paint, a touch with the stump and blacklead, or a bit of cotton-wool, and remove it, or alter it, at any moment we think fit.

Having casually mentioned "paint" and "blacklead," one is naturally induced to consider the question of hand work in connection with photography.

The reader will please to notice that hitherto the control exercised over the print is obtained by means *purely photographic*—by, as it were, simply taking the light in one's hand, so to speak, and using it, or not, almost as one might handle a paint-brush, whilst the negative performs the function of drawing.

It were easy enough of course to perform the same toning down of lights and heightening others by applying to the finished print washes of black paint or little patches of white respectively, but that as soon as we commence to do this we discover how all but impossible it is to perform it in such a manner that the applied pigment does not betray its presence. The texture of the printed image is of such peculiar character that neither brush or liquid paint seem capable of imitating it. Probably the nearest counterfeit to the appearance of a matt surface print, such as platinotype, may be arrived at by using finely powdered blacklead, or, better still, pulverised Conté crayon; but then we shall be met with the difficulty of matching the colour of the print.

The first and most conclusive objection, then, to working by hand on the print is *the difficulty of preventing the means whereby the effect is produced from betraying itself.* The moment the eye perceives that the picture is produced by other than the professed means, the effect, the appeal to the imagination, is disturbed. Art seeks ever to conceal the means by which its effects are produced and the method in which the work is wrought.

This is I think the strongest argument against hand-work on prints. As to the *legitimacy* of such work I do not think we need seriously concern ourselves—"legitimacy"

implies the existence of a law. I am unaware of any law concerning the matter. There are customs and conventions; but customs pass, and conventionalities are generally wrong.

If, however, photographic pictures are entered in competition with others, and the competition is for photography, then obviously it is dishonest to take advantage of the judge's inability to detect the fact that certain work is not only photography, but derives its chief merit from some alien method; for presumably hand-work is only added for the purpose of attaining something better than the plain photograph accomplished, and I would rather laws, customs, and conventions were sinned against, than that a man should be dishonest.

In works offered for exhibition, but not competition, even though it be presumed that the results are produced by photography, the deceit of hand-worked photographs is not so poignant, more especially if no printed declaration is required as to the work being purely photographic; but as anything produced by after working-up might as well be accomplished by utilising light instead of a pencil or crayon, it is clearly negligence or laziness which leads one to resort to direct hand-work, both of which in sincere artistic work are scarcely less criminal than dishonesty.

On the whole, I would rather not pronounce sentence on the question of hand-work on prints, preferring to leave it to each man's conscience to be the arbiter.

We are, then, driven to consider the legitimacy and possibility of working on the negative.

In such case the difficulty of matching colour and texture of print is got over, but another difficulty presents itself.

If, by colour or matt varnish or other body applied to the negative, we seek to alter its printing density, either to lighten or darken the image, very extraordinary judgment is needed to foretell exactly the result of such application. Our paper masks and covers were movable and alterable, which was one thing in their favour; and if photography as usually employed admits of the use of "retouching" as commonly understood, then he will be clever who shall distinguish between the legitimacy of pencil and that of pigment applied to the negative for a certain purpose: but whatever the means, and wherever we think fit to draw

the limit as regards the legitimacy of the thing, there is no going beyond that line when emphasis reaches palpable untruth or exaggeration.

Clouds.—Their Use, and Practical Instructions as to how to Photograph Them.

Artistically considered, there is no reason for any different treatment to be observed for the sky than for any other part of the picture. By sky will be understood generally to include all that which is above what is termed the sky-line, whether it be cloudless or cloudy.

Even after photographers awakened to the fact that a blank white space no more represented sky than a similar blank in the midst of a landscape would represent a grass field, skies and clouds were still regarded as something quite apart from the rest of the picture, and, indeed, are still so regarded by the less advanced.

Let it be remembered that the earth has never been seen except with a blue or grey sky or a canopy of clouds, and hence the average man has ceased to notice them.

The fact being once recognised, that a light object looks dark when seen against a white or very light object, and a moderately dark one light when a darker ground is behind it, and then the importance of the sky—nature's background—being in correct relative tone to the rest of the scene may be apparent.

Indeed, from much that has been said in the earlier part of this book, no further reference should be needed, neither should it be necessary to mention the existence of ready-made "cloud negatives," purchasable from most photographic dealers. The person who would photograph a landscape and then introduce a purchased cloud negative would be acting quite as sanely were he to make his own cloud negative and then use a bought landscape! There is nothing to choose between the two.

The sky is as much an essential part of the picture as any other part of it, and indeed, in very many instances, constitutes the key-note and important feature of the whole idea.

Before considering the principles which must guide our

selection, treatment, and introduction of clouds, we may devote a few moments to the question of cloud photography.

The difficulty which many beginners experience in making negatives of clouds is not easy to understand, except it be attributed to *over-exposure*. When we consider that probably with the most fearfully under-exposed negative we ever saw, the sky portion came up promptly enough in development, we may begin to get an inkling as to the very brief exposure required for the average dry plate to receive adequate light action from the sky.

Should any of my readers have failed to get useful cloud negatives, and are close upon giving up in despair, as I have known many to be, I would recommend them to forthwith take a *slow* plate, insert F 45 stop in the lens, and make a quick shutter exposure on some well-marked sun-lit clouds. Then develop with a slightly diluted developer, and see what comes of it. Probably, if the clouds be heavy, they will be a little under-exposed. Then, from this as a basis it should not be difficult to get on the right road.

The next point is to remember that in the sky there are some of the purest and brightest colours which nature ever wears, except in flowers, and those colours are all of a delicate kind. Were we photographing a similar colour scheme anywhere else we should most probably use isochromatic plates and a yellow screen as well. I think it is Mr. Ruskin who says the purest colours are in skies and clouds—he was probably thinking of Venice or Coniston—but as a general rule it is very true. Then remember how much more luminous the cloud colours are than the fairest silks and satins ever seen. The greater need then for isochromatic plates and yellow screen.

Now consider for a moment that next to the sun itself the sunlit clouds are perhaps the lightest things ordinarily met with, and the bright illumined edges are often contrasted with deep shadows. In a similar case elsewhere we should fear halation and lack of gradation in the high lights, and so should "back" our plates. A "backed" plate then, ischromatic, used with a yellow screen, may be taken as the full panoply of armour preventative of failure when photographing clouds. A proportionately longer exposure may now be given.

As regards development we should remember that however vivid the cloudscape appear there is ever present that softening effect of the great intervening veil of atmosphere. The nearest clouds are still very distant, and they are not cut out of solid material, but consist of rounded masses of vapour, hence we should in development use every means in our power to get a different result to that which we should seek if developing a negative of some terrestrial body.

As a general rule, then, the developing solution may be considerably diluted, or a minimum of the density-giving constituent employed.

If nearly clear glass represent shadows in the landscape, then the deepest tones in the sky may well be rendered by a veiling or "fogging," about equivalent in density to the distance in the landscape. Think of this from a common-sense point of view, and you will, without further hint from me, keep your cloud negatives thin—yet not too thin—and avoid extreme contrasts and solid high lights.

Clouds in landscape may be secured in two ways. First by rendering the clouds present at the moment of taking the landscape or other view *on the same negative.* Secondly by printing-in some clouds from a *separate negative.* Exposure dodges and development formulæ have been recommended for securing clouds and view on the same plate, and whilst these may or may not be successful the principal thing advanced in favour of such practice usually is that thereby we secure the entire scene *true to nature.* Now if the reader has followed me thus far, he will have learned that from a pictorial point of view mere truth to nature does not of itself constitute good art; but there are other considerations.

If we are to look to clouds as being part of the whole scene, and are to use them, as we certainly should do, to assist in the Composition as well as in helping to emphasize the idea or sentiment, then it is not to be supposed that the clouds present at the particular moment or on the particular day that we visit a certain scene, are just such as will serve this end.

Clouds are incessantly altering, skies are ever changing, and the sky of any one particular time is no more just

the most desirable than are the particular figures of all the varied passers-by that chance to present themselves to our view at the moment of selecting our picture.

Suppose, then, we wait until the clouds are suitable—then probably the effect of light and shade on our landscape which we desired will have passed away; but, waiving this even, we may ask whether, in those photographs in which Clouds and Landscape are preserved on the same plate, something is not lost and sacrificed in the one in our endeavour to secure the other? Or perhaps a compromise has been arranged, and both are a little below what they might have been, had they each had undivided and exclusive care.

We may often enough get a plate from which the clouds print as well as the landscape—but do they print to the same depth as they would have done, had not development been continued a little longer for the sake of the landscape?

We need set up no rule, but I would warn the pictorial worker against placing an exaggerated value on the negative which includes both clouds and landscape, for the two reasons that probably for the sake of such a negative we may be induced to put up with a cloud form which is not just as fine or suitable as we might select if we had more freedom, and also because we may also be led to accept a depth of tone in printing which would not satisfy were we printing from a separate negative.

It may be said that by controlling printing this latter objection is removed.

That is so, and so I repeat, there need be no rule; but I caution the student against forming a false idea of the value of such a negative.

In a properly exposed negative, if the colour values have been corrected by the use of isochromatic plates and coloured screens, then a blue or grey sky will be rendered in the negative as semi-transparent, and will print in half-tone. We cannot render the landscape colours and tones correctly without similarly rendering the sky to something approaching the same extent. This will be a trouble when we elect to print in clouds from another negative, and it will be necessary to paint out the sky, so that it prints

white unless we can dexterously cover it whilst printing the landscape portion.

We may now consider clouds under five heads—Perspective, Tone, Illumination, Composition, and Expression.

Perspective of Clouds.

It must be remembered that clouds, as they travel hither and thither in mid air, are as much subject to perspective as are terrestrial objects.

Many people would seem to think of the sky with its clouds as though it were a painted canopy or curtain covering our heads or let down behind the landscape as a background.

A little thought, however, will show that both *aerial* and *linear* perspective play as important a part in the heavens as on the earth beneath.

But the extreme variability of size, shape, and depth of colour or density, which is largely the source of colour, makes it impossible to frame any rules for the student's guidance, and hence the greater need for careful observation and study, noting the change both in tone and in form between a cloud overhead or midway between the zenith and horizon and the same or similar cloud when in the far distance, that is at the horizon, the alteration in tone being due chiefly to the intervening atmosphere through which we see the horizon clouds as through a veil, whilst the change in form is due to the different position in which we view them as compared with clouds above our heads, whilst the diminution in size is due to their remoteness.

Imagine yourself standing on the floor of a long, lofty gallery, from the ceiling of which are suspended a long row of gas-globes—looking up to those overhead we see the lower concave surface, each globe being separate; but as the row of globes recedes from us we see them closer together, until one nearly eclipses the next beyond, and we merely see a long series of lower edges. At the same time they rapidly diminish in size, as they become more remote (Fig. 16).

Now instead of gas-globes apply this to clouds on a day when the sky is filled with broken, scattered clouds which

travel across the heavens like a flock of sheep with cream-coloured fleece. Reduced to a very simple diagram, do they not conform somewhat to the following—Fig. 17?— whilst immediately overhead we have great flocculent masses of irregular form.

FIG. 16.

With these clouds over his head the landscapist need have nothing to do unless it be to gaze and wonder and dream. Obviously such clouds can never come into the same field of view as any landscape picture, and hence it should not be necessary to say that if by chance we should have a negative of clouds higher in the heavens than our ordinary angle of vision would include when viewing a landscape, such negative can never be used. I have endeavoured to show this by a diagram in which the angle included can at the most only be from B to the base formed by the foreground and mid-distance—that is, the highest clouds we see when looking at a landscape are those which appear to hover over the middle distance. From that point, then, up to the zenith, the heavens are not within our field of view, and the picture will be represented by the vertical line which includes from the point in the foreground marked A and the point on the heavens marked B. I think the diagram will now explain itself.

FIG. 17.

As a further illustration, let us consider the following. Suppose we have a cloud negative similar to Fig. 17, the illustration above, and we print it into a landscape thus—Fig. 19. This must be wrong, because we are using on the horizon a cloud the form of which belongs to a cloud much nearer. The sky line can only cut such a cloud when it is a high hill or other object, as tall trees, etc., near at hand. Then it would be right, as

FIG. 18.

in Fig. 20, in which case the horizon of the Cloud Negative coincides with the horizon of the landscape, but that it is

FIG. 19.

FIG. 20.

not visible, being shut out by the hills the sky line of which is much higher up than the horizon.

This may serve as a very safe rule; that, whether our landscape view shows us the horizon (formed actually by the spherical figure of the earth passing out of sight, and hence only existing in comparatively flat country) or not, the horizon of the cloud negative should be made to agree with the imaginary horizon of the landscape. If this rule be adhered to, the clouds seen above the landscape will at least be in true perspective.

Now, whilst the foregoing diagrams and examples may be readily applied to clouds of a certain kind, and may thus form a basis for our subsequent studies, there are very many cloud forms and conditions of sky for which it will be all but impossible to give rules and diagrams; but if the examples given have made it clear that the appearance of a cloud changes, and must change according to its position with regard to ourselves as it passes from zenith to horizon, then I shall leave it to each student to constantly and deliberately study clouds under all conditions, as also in all positions, until his eye becomes accustomed to the various forms, and is thus able to detect at once any mistake, should it be committed.

As has been pointed out, the cloud masses vary so much that mere relative size alone will not in the picture sufficiently suggest distance, and even form alone may not be all-convincing, owing to the fact that circumstances and the capriciousness of nature may even present us with phenomenal cloud forms which appear at variance with all preconceived notions and all such rules as we may have been able to build up from our previous studies. It may be as well to avoid phenomenal and eccentric cloud-scapes, availing ourselves rather of those clouds which help to the idea and effect we wish to convey.

There is, however, another factor which may help us, and that is aerial perspective.

The higher the clouds are from the horizon, the nearer they are to us, and hence proportionately of greater intensity, greater in contrast of light and shade, this being due to the fact that as in aerial perspective of distant landscape, already referred to, the more remote an object the greater amount of intervening visible atmosphere. As a general rule, therefore, the lights and shadows of clouds

near the horizon are less vivid than in clouds higher up. Exceptions to this rough rule will be found when the source of light is near the horizon, as in sunset and sunrise, also when there is a gathering of local storm-clouds which may hover over the distance as a dark pall, when there is fair weather and light, transparent clouds near to us.

No matter how dark the night or how cloudy the day, with some very rare exceptions, upon opening the eyes the first impression is that the heavens are much lighter than the earth, and we may hence deduce the following rule: distant clouds are lighter than distant landscape, and the same applies to middle distance and other parts. Exceptions may be found when the sea forms the horizon, and is strongly illuminated from the sun in certain positions, when the sea will appear as slightly lighter than the clouds beyond; but, remembering that distance not only lightens shadows but also lowers lights, the very lightness of the sea in such a case makes it appear nearer than the sky, and the same end is accomplished. In rare cases, if the sun be behind the observer, the distant land may catch a powerful ray of sunlight, whilst the clouds overhanging it may remain in shadow, and hence light buildings, yellow cornfields, etc., may appear lighter than the distant clouds, but they at the same time gain in an appearance of nearness. In any case, the most careful observation must be made, and the knowledge gained put into practice, to the end that our distant clouds appear to pass beyond and behind the distant horizon which they of course actually do.

The relative lightness and darkness of distant and mid-distant clouds have been referred to, and it may be noted that there are no clouds equivalent to the foreground, because our angle of view does not include the very nearest clouds; moreover, the clouds above us are more remote than the foreground at our feet. The little diagram already given may make this suggestion more useful (Fig. 18); thus the clouds which come at the top of our picture are in reality only the clouds over the middle distance.

Illumination of Clouds and the Direction of Light.*

This is another matter that will need careful study, because the earth, having only one chief source of light, it follows that if clouds be printed into a landscape, both must show evidence of being lighted from the same direction.

If the landscape is lighted from the left, shadows being cast on the ground towards the right, then must the clouds be also lighted from the left, the right-hand side of the cloud masses being in shadow. To use in such a case clouds with the sun evidently above them, will, upon a little consideration, be seen to be an absolute incongruity.

If we can only school ourselves to regard the clouds as an essential part of every picture, and not as a sort of mounting or finishing touch, the enormity of the clouds being lighted from any other than the exact same point as the landscape, should appear as great as though we had in the same view a cottage lighted from the left, a tree lighted from the right, and shadows in the foreground falling away from us, showing the sun to be behind us.

To the unpractised eye it may not always be easy to say at once, on looking at a print from any negative, precisely from what direction the light is coming. Such knowledge can only come from training the eye and accustoming oneself to natural effects by frequently observing them.

It may be said by some that by securing clouds and landscape on the same plate, any incongruity may be avoided, and that being accurate to nature, all that can be required is attained. This is not, however, the case, because nature often produces combinations and effects which on paper *appear* incorrect. Thus, for instance, we may have a case of evening, when the setting sun is quite obscured by thick clouds, whilst a rent in the clouds in the north or east may give the appearance of the sun being behind the clouds in the north or east, in which case it would, although untrue, be better to print in the north

* Numerous practical references to this and other matters in Cloud Photography will be found in Book II.

or east light into the west, so as to give it the appearance of the sun's being in that position—truthfulness in *appearance* being more important than truthfulness to *fact*.

Composition and Clouds considered as an Aid to Expression.

I need say but little under this heading, having already spoken of Composition and Selection generally, having also pointed out that clouds must be regarded as an integral part of the whole picture, so that what applies to one part applies to another.

Fig. 21.—No. 1.

Hence, whether we photograph clouds on the same plate as the scene, or fit them in from another, the moment of exposure in the former case, and the choice of the cloud in the latter, must be determined by a full consideration for pleasing design or Composition, and also with a care that the feeling or idea of the scene is carried out, and as far as possible increased by the clouds employed.

As regards Composition, a landscape which was not well balanced or symmetrical of itself may be made desirable by the introduction of suitable clouds, yet would it hardly

be correct to say of the completed picture that it would be badly composed *but for the clouds*, because, as the clouds are part of the whole picture, the whole must be condemned or praised according as the whole is good. In like manner one would not say of a man that he would be good-looking but for his face.

As examples will be given and explained in Part II. of Composition of Clouds and their Assistance in Expression, only one or two general instances need be given here.

In the accompanying sketches, No. 2 is preferable to No. 1, because in the first the general lines of the clouds repeat the lines formed by the bank of trees and the

FIG. 21.—No. 2.

path, and so give the whole a one-sided appearance, whereas in No. 2 the lines counteract or balance. So also in No. 3 the forms of the clouds repeat to some extent the shape of the trees, and leave the right-hand side vacant and empty; but in No. 4 this space is filled, and the Composition seems better balanced again. It will be seen that in No. 3 the trees are illuminated from the left, whereas the sun is indicated as being in front of the spectator. In No. 4 the illumination of the trees agrees with the position of the sun.

It should be a point for careful consideration, then, that with due consideration for perspective, lighting, etc., those clouds should be chosen for a landscape which, together with the landscape, will make a well-composed, well-balanced, and symmetrical whole.

The expression which clouds may be said to give is an almost impossible thing to illustrate. In a dreary and impressive landscape of winter, amongst the moors or weird fen-lands, bright sunlit clouds, which seem to dance with fairy lightness in the airy heavens, would not be so well calculated to carry out the sentiment of the scene as

FIG. 21.—No. 3.

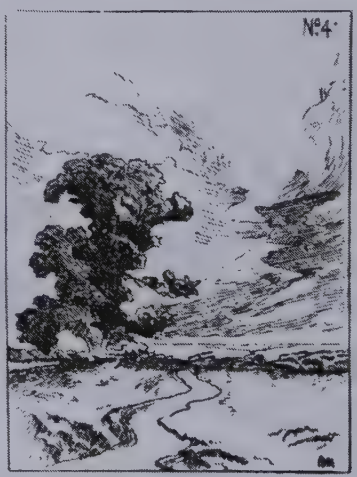


FIG. 21.—No. 4.

wind-torn and ragged clouds, dark with rain and rent here and there by shafts of sunlight. The calm peacefulness of evening by the river would be best seen with the long bars of grey and purple cloud restful and still: the rustic scene of wayside cottage, children playing, the sheep grazing, the denizens of the poultry-yard rejoicing in the shallows of the brook or road-side pool, the whole an embodiment of simple country life and the gladness of summer—with such the most appropriate sky will be that over which the light fleecy clouds glide in the glorious flood of sunlight.

A Grey Sky Sometimes Advisable.

It must not be supposed that it is always necessary to present our landscapes with an attractive and well-defined arrangement of clouds; on the contrary, it will often happen that the effect of a scene is best emphasized by a mere grey tint representing a covered sky or even a blue, cloudless sky; but this is a very different thing to rendering it as a white blank. Because our picture includes so many square inches above the representation of the landscape, it does not necessarily follow that that space must needs be occupied by incident and detail any more than that every portion of the landscape needs to be crammed with objects of interest. If it is felt that the interest, or the effect, in the principal subject is enhanced by subduing the sky and clouds, and that the introduction of bright lights and pleasing forms above the horizon would distract and take attention from the principal interest, then by keeping the clouds subdued and quiet in character, they will as directly assist the Composition as if they were deliberately chosen to help the Composition; but observation of nature will have taught us that a grey, cloudy sky, or a clear blue one, is not of a uniform tint throughout, but that the same conditions which we have seen makes the clouds lighter at the horizon than at the zenith, affects the blue sky, making it lighter and darker as it stretches from the distance to above our heads; and this gradation must be carefully observed and reproduced if we would prevent our grey tint from looking like a solid flat wall.

Should our landscape negative print with a blank white for the sky, then this may be tinted down by exposure to light, either without a negative or with a plate which has been fogged or exposed to a blank sky, or other even tint; the latter course is the better, because the character of the deposit, caused by printing without an intervening tinted glass, appears often different to that of the rest of the picture. If, on the other hand, our landscape negative has a sky portion semi-transparent, which prints through, and so tints the sky of the print, this will do as well, so long as the gradation from horizon upwards is shown.

Development of Negatives.

From all that has gone before we ought to have gleaned a general idea as to what we require in pictorial work, and with this knowledge we shall probably seek to secure negatives which will help us to this end.

It will be best to at once cast aside all preconceived notions as to what constitutes a good negative. A good negative is one thing, but a negative that will enable us to get a good picture is another. In the first case the negative may be admired for its own sake, but in the second place it is merely a means to an end, and may even be a very poor negative as a negative.

In order to secure true rendering of colour values, it has already been proposed that isochromatic plates be used, and with a yellow screen of greater or less depth.

As a general rule a very full exposure will be best, taking care that in the end no part of the landscape, not even deep shadows, is represented by quite clear glass.

It is demonstrable that even from the deep shadows some light is reflected, and whilst the higher lights may be much over-exposed before the feeble light reflected from shadows has any appreciable effect on the film, that is a matter we must endeavour to correct afterwards.

Slight over-exposure is, then, to be sought rather than feared.

The typically good negative which is set up as a pattern to most beginners is brilliant and clear, having the high lights nearly opaque, and the shadows nearly clear glass. Such a negative, with most of the printing methods in common use, will fail to give gradation in the high lights without burying the lower tones in intense darkness; hence, generally speaking, a thin negative, one with a minimum of contrast and density, yet with just sufficient to give the amount of contrast required in the print, should be aimed at; but it must possess very soft gradation throughout.

Another reason for desiring a thin negative is that whilst in dodging or controlling the printing we can keep back the printing—that is, we can make portions print lighter—we cannot so easily print other parts darker, hence it is as

well to have a negative which will print darkly, on which we can, as it were, build as we think fit.

Moreover, I have pointed to the desirability of keeping watch over and guiding the action of the light during the whole time the print is forming; hence a thin, that is a quick printing one, is the only thing that will not try the patience of an average person.

There is, of course, no reason why any developing formula should not be equally serviceable so long as it is manipulated so as to produce a soft, thin negative.

As I have given some recommendations on practical matters, I may as well give the formula I have used now for some years with all kinds of plates; and I want nothing better.

No. 1.

Pyrogallol	1 oz.
Potassium Bromide	½ „
Potassium Metabisulphite . .	1 „
Water to make	10 „

No. 2.

Ammonia ·880	2 oz.
Water	8 „

For use take one dram of each to from 3 to 6 ozs. to water.

In cases of negatives which I have suspected of slight under-exposure, or when the subject promised to come hard, I have used with great satisfaction a very weak Rodinal developer, using two or three times the amount of water recommended for ordinary purposes.

If the reader now asks what do I think of this paper or that process, of this brand of plates or of that? Is intensification or reduction to be resorted to? Are enlargements as good as direct work?—I have but one answer to all, and that is that only those methods are good which will give you a satisfactory realisation of the idea you have in mind. Any paper or process which will do this is good. If an enlargement from a small negative seems to give a

fairly satisfactory expression of the idea intended, and the smaller direct print fails, there is your answer; and neither the writer or any one else has any knowledge which can give you a better.

Size, the mere number of square inches, of a picture, counts for nothing. A small picture may be quite as satisfying as a large; for remember that, as compared with the size of the mountain itself, the difference between a picture of it, thirty inches long, and one of six inches, is less than trifling.

I will now ask the student to follow me to the second part of this little book, in which he will find several photographs by various authors reproduced, and criticism accompanying each, in which I have endeavoured to show more directly the application of the principles and rules given in the foregoing pages.

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